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**HUNGARIAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS:  
ASSESSING PROSPECTS  
FOR COOPERATION AND CONFLICT**

By  
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December 1994

Thesis Advisor:

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ASSESSING PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION AND CONFLICT**

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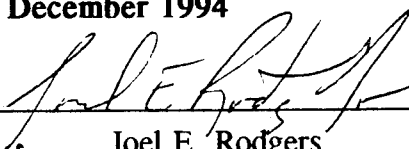
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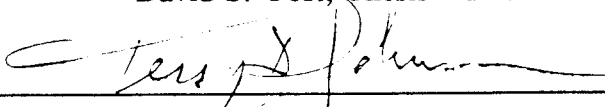
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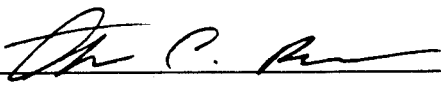
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates to what extent antagonism between Hungary and Romania may affect their future relations. The antagonistic elements in their relations are rooted in each nation's history and strategic culture. However, since strategic culture is only one of a large array of factors determining state behavior, structural realism and other pertinent theories are also considered in this examination of contemporary political interactions. Western options to deal with the problem are also assessed, in order to evaluate the degree to which external powers may be able to constructively influence Hungarian-Romanian relations.

This thesis concludes that Hungarian-Romanian relations will probably improve as these states become more deeply integrated into the Western community of nations. This improvement may not mean friendship between the two states, but it may entail a better working relationship necessitated by a common need to become integrated with the West. However, the problems between the two countries may be too deeply entrenched to be solved in a generation. Conflict in the form of diplomatic posturing and verbal jousting may continue as before, but the threat of armed combat has subsided with the increase of Western influence in the region.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Antagonism has existed between Romania and Hungary at varying intensities for a millennium. The province of Transylvania, with its multiethnic population, serves as the main catalyst for their modern animosities. The Treaty of Trianon (1920) transferred control of Transylvania from Hungary to Romania, and created a minority population of nearly two million Magyars (ethnic Hungarians) within the Romanian state. Two principal dilemmas have characterized Hungarian-Romanian relations ever since: discrimination against minorities within Romania and Hungarian irredentism regarding Transylvania.

A survey of Hungarian strategic culture reveals several basic characteristics. Hungarians are convinced that they belong in the Western group of nations and should be promptly admitted to institutions such as NATO and the European Union. The end of the Soviet empire has left Hungary without allies. Hungarians view themselves as surrounded by hostile nations, and are thus extremely sensitive to regional concerns. Finally, the plight of Magyars abroad will remain important to Hungary's national interest as long as a strong perception of kinship endures.

The ideology of discrimination became an integral part of Romanian strategic culture during the decades following the Trianon treaty, and has been reinforced by governments representing all sides of the political spectrum ever since. For the ethnic Romanians, loyalty to their culture is synonymous with loyalty to the state (a highly regarded virtue). Meanwhile, the ethnic Romanians view cultural autonomy in the Magyar case as being the first step towards the reunification of Transylvania with Hungary. Romanians see Hungarian involvement in their minority problems as an intrusion in a

sovereign issue and as evidence that Hungary still maintains irredentist designs upon Transylvania. Traditions of public conformity, passivity and deference to authority in Romania also endanger the future of its democracy. The government's lack of institutionalized checks and balances and its inability to control local authorities hamper Romania's ability to change.

The 1994 Hungarian election returned the former communist leaders to power in a landslide victory. The new government will probably continue economic reforms, but at a much slower pace, and create an environment in which Hungarian-Romanian relations may improve. However, Prime Minister Horn, like his predecessor, is too politically weak to go against popular sentiment regarding the importance of minority issues, despite his party's electoral clout.

The Romanian political scene is fraught with many problems. The continuing escalation of the war of words between Romania's minority and extreme nationalist parties blocks any pragmatic approach by the government to correct the social ills of the country. While President Iliescu and his political allies represent the moderate element in Romanian politics, they are unable to enact needed social reforms without the acquiescence of the extreme nationalist faction of the ruling coalition.

Association with, and eventual full membership in, established security organizations such as NATO and the European Union is the main means by which Romania and Hungary seek to address their internal problems. Hungarians firmly believe that integration with the West, actually re-integration in their minds, will allow the state to solve its current economic and security problems, ushering in a new era of prosperity.

On the other hand, Romania's political, economic, and social problems (including its treatment of minorities) could inhibit Romanian integration into the Western fold.

The lack of domestic stability prevents both Hungary and Romania from addressing the issues dividing them in a spirit of compromise. Acceptance of Hungary and Romania into existing Western organizations appears to be the best long-term means of positively influencing relations between these two states. Through the exchange of information, mutual awareness and understanding can be fostered; and thus the root problems of mistrust and discrimination can be resolved. NATO is a Western institution in which U.S. influence is unquestioned. The U.S. therefore has a direct means of helping to solve the Budapest-Bucharest diplomatic logjam by prompting NATO to accept Hungary into the fold. Integration of Romania into NATO should also occur promptly, when that state is ready, but Hungarian integration should not be delayed solely for fear of possible Romanian complaints.

Hungarian-Romanian relations will probably improve as these states become more deeply integrated into the Western community of nations. Conflict in the form of diplomatic posturing and verbal jousting may continue as before, but the threat of armed combat has subsided with the increase of Western influence. However, armed conflict approaching civil war within Romania remains possible. If such a confrontation occurred, the logical source of support for the Romanian Magyars would be Hungary. Thus, as long as the possibility of Romanian internal conflict remains plausible, so too does the possibility of a Hungarian-Romanian war.



# **I. INTRODUCTION**

The tumultuous history of the Balkan region created intense inter- and intra-state conflicts throughout East-Central Europe. Romania and Hungary are two examples of this phenomenon. These two states have been at odds with one another since the Middle Ages. Many wars occurred between them as a result of centuries under foreign rule. The great power politics of Austria, Russia and the Ottoman Empire over control of the Balkans often pitted Romania and Hungary against one another as vassal states. The nineteenth century witnessed the independence of both nations, yet difficulties continued and even intensified.

The province of Transylvania, with its multiethnic population, serves as a catalyst for their modern animosities. One consequence of the First World War was the shifting of Transylvania from Hungarian to Romanian control. Nearly two million ethnic Hungarians became minority citizens within the Romanian state. Since then, Hungarian - Romanian relations have been characterized by two principal dilemmas. First, discrimination against, and even persecution of, minorities within Romania is well documented. Hungary considers itself the champion of all ethnic Hungarians within the region, and therefore abhors Romanian minority policies. However, the Romanians perceive this stance as interference in their sovereignty. Hence the second issue. Romanians believe that Hungarian irredentism regarding the lost province of Transylvania persists to the present. They are very skeptical of all Hungarian initiatives as a result.

## **A. THESIS GOALS**

This thesis investigates to what extent animosity between these nations may affect their future relations. An examination of the causes of tension and of government reactions and counter-reactions, followed by an analysis of current efforts to resolve the issues, is undertaken. A study of each nation's history and strategic culture should reveal the foundations of their mutual anxieties toward one another. Since strategic cultural study is far from being an exact scientific discipline, and since strategic culture is only one of a large array of factors determining state behavior, structural realism and other pertinent theories are also considered in this examination of contemporary political interactions. Finally, an assessment of Western options to deal with the



problem is included in the conclusion. One of the key purposes of this thesis is to evaluate the degree to which external powers may be able to constructively influence Hungarian - Romanian relations.

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis examines Hungarian-Romanian relations at the state and sub-state levels. The scholarly methodology consists of an extensive survey and qualitative analysis of historical materials, official documents and current press reports.

## **C. ORGANIZATION OF ARGUMENT**

There are three key elements to understanding future bilateral relations: 1) where each state has been, 2) where each currently stands, and 3) where each wishes to go. History sheds light on the first element, but gives little insight to the other two. Current news and intelligence reports answer the second while a state's national interest as articulated in policies or actions reveals the third. However, by studying strategic culture, we learn what *effect* history and culture have had and potentially will have on a country's policy making. An assessment of Hungary's and Romania's strategic culture, contemporary problems, and professed national interests can yield reasonable judgments about the probable course of their future relations. A nation's strategic culture derives from its geographical circumstance, political culture, and most importantly its history.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore logical to begin with separate examinations of the Hungarian and Romanian strategic cultures in order to establish a common understanding of where each state has been, and provide a backdrop in which contemporary decisions are made.

Next, a thorough comprehension of each state's domestic politics is essential in understanding current international maneuvering. Culture helps to explain distinctive approaches to problems, but such patterns can also be explained by the interactions of institutions and power elites.<sup>2</sup> According to Kenneth Waltz's structural realist theory,

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<sup>1</sup>Ken Booth, "The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed: What is Strategic Culture?", in Strategic Power: USA/USSR, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen, (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Jack Snyder, "The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor," in Strategic Power: USA/USSR, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen, (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 7.

whether these institutions are themselves affected by culture is insignificant, because once governments are established, the workings of the international system as a whole limit the amount of possible policy deviation from accepted norms. The system punishes non-conformers, according to structural realist theory.<sup>3</sup> The question is, how much deviation *is* accepted before other states condemn one's actions? Since the limit is constantly changing and may not be apparent short of war or confrontation, political groups can espouse very radical agendas and still garner main stream support. Thus, political parties from all points on the spectrum can influence their state's behavior in three crucial ways: by forcing the ruling government to follow less moderate agendas in order to capitalize upon public sympathies, through scaring other states by revealing radical attitudes or tendencies, and through actual governance. An appreciation of the political environment from which the Bucharest and Budapest governments hail is necessary in order to discern their potential future policies.

Once the political attitude and posturing of each state is firmly established, a look at the current issues between them is in order. Each issue will be scrutinized, and an appraisal made as to possible future courses they could take in light of Hungarian and Romanian attitudes, national interests and international constraints. A look at incentives for cooperation as well as incentives to capitalize upon grievances shall be made. After assessing past trends and possible future paths, suggestions will be made as to how the West can positively influence Hungarian - Romanian relations in the coming century. The events in the former Yugoslavia have shown the world that the most effective means of quelling nationalist discontent is before an actual conflict erupts. The cosmopolitan nature of Transylvania and the traditional discord between Romania and Hungary could ignite more Balkan violence and a potential region wide conflict. Therefore, peaceful solutions to their problems are of vital importance to the West and the international community as a whole.

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<sup>3</sup>Waltz, Kenneth N. "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power," in Neorealism and its Critics, ed. Robert O. Keohane, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).



## II. STRATEGIC CULTURE

All governments make decisions based upon their unique perceptions of the world. This individuality, called strategic culture, is the result of a nation's traditions, values, attitudes, patterns of behavior, habits, symbols, and achievements. This culture derives from political and historical experiences as well as geographical factors. Strategic culture is personified in the attitudes and behavior of a nation's political elite, including politicians and the military establishment and their views regarding public opinion. It represents one factor that helps determine how a nation interacts with others in the security field.<sup>4</sup>

The study of strategic culture is a tool for identifying subtle differences in the behavior of states, and how these differences condition the strategic environment.<sup>5</sup> Understanding the differences in how nations are likely to view various situations and react to them is of "great importance" to strategic thinking.<sup>6</sup> Cultural study adds to the general knowledge of state relations by avoiding ethnocentrism, contributing to an appreciation of the behavior of others, underlining the importance of history, and by helping to explain "irrationalities in the thinking and behavior of those not socialized in the cultural traditions of the observer."<sup>7</sup> In short, society represents the foundation upon which states rest. A basic knowledge of a society is essential in understanding that state's politics. Its accompanying culture directly affects the actions of its leaders. For example, culture may limit the range of options acceptable to the society. Thus, strategic culture represents an influencing factor upon international decision making.

### A. HUNGARY

#### 1. An Overview of Hungary's History

The ethnically mixed people who originally inhabited the Hungarian plains were conquered by the Magyars, who lived along the Don river in southern Russia until this

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<sup>4</sup>Booth, p. 121.

<sup>5</sup>Yitzhak Klein, "A Theory of Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1991, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>6</sup>Andrew W. Marshall, "Strategy as a Profession for Future Generations," in *On Not Confusing Ourselves: Essays on National Security Strategy in Honor of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter*, ed. Andrew W. Marshall, J.J. Martin, and Henry S. Rowen. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 310.

<sup>7</sup>Booth, p. 124.

time. The Magyars quickly imposed their language and culture upon their predecessors, and also managed to incorporate the Turkic Cumans who invaded in the thirteenth century. The Magyars were largely nomadic pastoral people at this point in history. Their raids into surrounding lands ended after a crushing defeat at the hands of the Saxon King Otto I near Augsburg in 955.

Hungary's first king, Stephen I (997 - 1038), united the region. Under his reign the Hungarian plain was agriculturally tamed and the nomadic lifestyle began to fade. Magyars thoroughly dominated the kingdom, although many Slavs populated the region as well. Stephen used his power and influence to convert the population and bring them into the Roman Catholic Church. He was later canonized for his role. This action served to bring Hungary into the European community of nations. Catholic Hungary proved invaluable to Western Europe in the following century when it acted as a shield against the invading Mongols who dominated Russia and the East.

Another Hungarian ethnic group appeared around the time of Saint Stephen. The Szekely people, who lived in Transylvania and the nearby Carpathian Mountains, are closely related to the Magyars and speak a language nearly identical to that found on the plain. Their origins are clouded. Modern Szekelys prefer to believe that they are the descendants of early Magyars sent out to protect Hungary by guarding the mountain passes. Magyar and Szekely history diverge throughout the Middle Ages in the sense that they were not always engaged in the same conflicts nor were they always allied. However, by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they had become so closely associated with the Magyars that they were usually combined with the Magyars as one ethnic group in censuses. This practice continued until the 1980s. For our purposes, the Szekely and Transylvanian Magyars will be treated as a single ethnic group since they have shared the same experiences for over a century.<sup>5</sup>

The two centuries following Stephen's reign were marked by Magyar expansion into present day Croatia and Bosnia. After defeating Mongol invasions and internal anarchy, expansion continued into Serbia, Bulgaria and Wallachia. The Hungarian Kingdom was now reaching its zenith (it would soon have to contend with Turkish interest in the Balkans), but the kingdom's impact upon the region was already made. Magyars were now thoroughly dispersed throughout the Balkans.

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<sup>5</sup>Norman J. G. Pounds, Eastern Europe, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 47 - 48.

The Turks invaded Europe in 1345 and again in 1354. The latter date marked the beginning of a Balkan occupation that continues today, albeit on a smaller scale. Thrace, Bulgaria and Serbia had fallen to Turkish power within a decade of the invasion, but Ottoman expansion then stalled. The campaign up the Danube resumed in the sixteenth century under the Sultan Suleiman. In 1526, the Hungarian kingdom disintegrated after the defeat and death of their king, Louis II, at the Battle of Mohacs. Ferdinand, lord of the German Habsburg lands and cousin of Louis II, was promptly elected king of Hungary and Bohemia. Ferdinand and his brother Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, continued to war with the Turks in an attempt to reclaim the lost Hungarian lands. However, religious tensions within Charles' empire forced the brothers to finally accept a peace in 1547 that recognized Ottoman possession of the greater part of their conquests.<sup>9</sup> Hungary was thus divided into three parts. The Austrian Habsburgs and Ottoman Turks each received a portion of the country while Transylvania became an autonomous province under Ottoman suzerainty, although a Hungarian dynasty nominally reigned. The Turks retained possession of the Hungarian plain well into the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

"The Turkish impact on the lands which they occupied was almost wholly negative."<sup>11</sup> The Ottomans had conquered the area for political and financial reasons. Their armies were garrisoned throughout the region to maintain order, but few Turks came to the area to settle. In fact, the actual number of Turks within the region was so small that only the trade routes and metropolitan areas were effectively controlled, while the mountains and wilderness remained under the jurisdiction of local tribes. Merchants and tax collectors from Asia Minor, many of whom were Greek and Jewish, exploited the area economically with the help of the military. Christianity was tolerated under the Moslems, with an insignificant number converting to Islam within Hungary. The main influences of the Ottoman reign in Hungary were the destruction of its sovereignty and the stifling of economic development for several centuries.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the Thirty Years War (1618 - 48) significantly altered the political and religious structure of Habsburg Hungary. Jean Calvin, the French theologian, led religious thought down a new path during the Protestant Reformation. His doctrine of

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<sup>9</sup>Wallace K. Ferguson and Geoffrey Bruun, *A Survey of European Civilization*. (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), pp. 204, 255, 425 - 26.

<sup>10</sup>Pounds, p. 48, 52.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

Calvinism emphasized predestination, the sovereignty of God, the supreme authority of the Scriptures, and the irresistibility of God's influence within man that strengthens his actions. The war began when Czech-Calvinists in Bohemia revolted against the Habsburg rulers who threatened their religious and national freedom. The conflict was finally settled at the Peace of Westphalia (1648). This peace was a turning point in European history. The granting of sovereignty to states that formerly made up the Holy Roman Empire gave birth to the modern nation-state, and an international system based upon territorial aggrandizement. For Hungary, the dissolution of the Empire's power forced the Habsburgs to rely upon their own hereditary lands, and their policies increasingly became Austro-centric. Religion, the original cause of the war, was nearly forgotten by the war's end.<sup>13</sup> Ninety percent of the population of Hungary followed Protestant creeds by the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup> They were now free to worship as they chose.

Turkish domination receded by the end of the seventeenth century. A siege of Vienna was lifted in 1683, prompting a string of Austrian victories. The Hungarian fortress of Buda (modern Budapest) was freed three years later. By 1717 the Christians laid siege to the Serbian fortress of Beograd, marking the end of Turkish control over the Hungarian plain. Peace was finally established at Passarowitz the following year. Transylvania was politically reunited with the Habsburg lands, including Hungary. Thus, victory over the Turks was bittersweet. The Magyars and other ethnic groups had traded one overlord for another. Life under the Christian Habsburgs was more palatable, but the Habsburg rule was a precarious one, maintained by playing one ethnic group against another.<sup>15</sup>

The Austrian Empire under the Habsburgs was the most conservative of the great powers. The empire was dominated by the landed aristocracy who went unchallenged due to the lack of a developed middle class. The majority of the population were peasants with only a very small number of merchants, businessmen and manufacturers. The various ethnic groups within the empire were theoretically represented by provincial diets or "estates" dating back to medieval times, but these groups rarely met and had no recognizable influence. Vienna controlled state administration through loyal local nobles supplemented by the police, army and

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<sup>13</sup>Ferguson, pp. 501 - 10.

<sup>14</sup>Peter F. Sugar, *A History of Hungary*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 94.

<sup>15</sup>Pounds, pp. 474 - 75.

bureaucracy. The provinces were loosely governed in all respects but one. As is true with all states, the very goal of Austria was its own perpetuation, which meant that the forces of liberalism and nationalism that threatened the delicate underpinnings of the state were systematically suppressed.<sup>16</sup>

Magyar culture survived under the Austrians despite Germanization attempts. The preservation of local medieval institutions helped to defend the people from the central authorities. Vienna conceded the creation of a Central Hungarian Diet in 1825 in order to facilitate central control over the many quasi-government bodies. The Diet provided a platform for Stephan Széchenyi, one of the richest men in Hungary, to become an early spokesman for nationalist ideals. Széchenyi sought to raise the standard of living of the peasantry by bringing Hungary into the modern age. He agitated for agricultural modernization, the creation of investment capital to stimulate industry, and the abolition of tariff practices which separated Hungary from Austria. Some of his proposed measures were enacted, but Széchenyi's real contribution was setting the stage for a future confrontation.

The European wide revolutions of 1848 had profound repercussions within the Austrian Empire. A Hungarian nationalist leader and excellent orator named Lajos Kossuth took advantage of the situation by making a speech in the Budapest Diet denouncing the absolutist system and calling for a constitutionally based government. His ideas drew support from the newly emerging middle-class businessmen who felt economically handicapped by the central government, and from the peasantry and country gentry who understood the backwardness of the feudal system then in place. On March 13 public demonstrations turned into street fighting which forced the King to abandon Metternich, his Chancellor of thirty-nine years and architect of the "divide and conquer" strategy used to quell nationalism within the empire. Spurred on by their new found influence, the Hungarian patriots circulated a list of demands two days later. They advocated a new Hungarian constitution that would provide for a national diet elected by males with property, civil and religious freedom for all subjects as well as freedom of the press, an end to the feudal privileges held by the nobility, and the creation of its own ministries of war, finance and foreign affairs, which would make Hungary completely autonomous within the Austrian Empire. On March 31, the

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<sup>16</sup>David Thomson, Europe Since Napoleon, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1957), p. 110.



government in Vienna agreed to all of these reforms in an effort to salvage the empire.<sup>17</sup>

The increased status of Hungary within the empire failed to please everyone. Slavs reacted to the proposition of a renewed Hungarian Kingdom by splitting Hungary in two. A Slav state was proclaimed, combining the repressed Slavs in Hungary with Croats and Serbs in the south. This state also demanded recognition from Vienna. Unfortunately, the two nationalist movements allowed Vienna to regain its hold upon the region. The Hungarian Diet was dissolved by the emperor and the Magyars were soon attacked from three sides; Austria from the north, the Slavs under Count Joseph Jellachich to the south, and a Russian force sent by the arch-conservative Tsar Nicholas I to the east. Defeated by superior strength, Louis Kossuth and his followers were forced to surrender. Hungary remained an Austrian province.<sup>18</sup>

Although the revolutionary movement was quelled in 1848, the widespread dissatisfaction with the Vienna government could not be overlooked for long. The humiliating defeat to France and numerous Italian Kingdoms during a war over Lombardy in 1859 forced the Emperor Francis Joseph to accept change. The provincial diets were revived and the Imperial Council (*Reichsrat*) was given greater power in a move toward constitutionalism. However, the emperor ultimately refused to accept a federalist state structure and so the reforms failed to soothe nationalist tensions. Protest movements against the Reichsrat and German domination in general began to spread.

The Magyars under the direction of Francis Déak (1803 - 76) became the staunchest foes of the regime. Déak differed from the now exiled Kossuth in that he believed Hungary could not stand alone as a sovereign state and therefore sought reconciliation within the empire on the terms accepted in 1848. Austria's defeat by Prussia in the short war of 1866 forced the emperor to concede to the Magyars. Without Magyar support, the Austrian Empire would no longer be a great power, if an entity at all. So in 1867 the *Ausgleich* (Compromise) was endorsed, transforming the state into a dual monarchy of two equal kingdoms under the same monarch. Each half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would have its own parliament and civil administration, but there would be one army and a joint ministry charged with affairs concerning the military, foreign affairs and financial matters. The compromise returned

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<sup>17</sup>Gordon A. Craig, *Europe Since 1815, Alternate Edition*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich College Publishers, 1974), pp. 39 - 40, 89 - 90.

<sup>18</sup>Ferguson, pp. 719 - 20.

a semblance of efficiency to the empire, but failed to solve the nationality crisis; for it represented a deal between the German minority in the western part of the empire and the Magyar minority in the east. The Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Poles and Rumanians had failed to gain their own autonomy. Before the Compromise, nationalist movements advocated autonomy within the empire, but afterwards they desired total independence.

The Kingdom of Hungary, encompassing roughly the same area as the medieval kingdom minus Bosnia and Dalmatia, was governed by a bicameral parliament made up of a House of Magnates and a House of Deputies. Parliament was not a popular assembly, for the franchise was extremely limited by electoral law. As a result of the initial franchise, the Magyars dominated all levels of political power despite constituting less than half of the 15 million population. The government soon embarked upon the assimilation of all other ethnic groups into the Magyar culture. Only the Croats in southwestern Hungary had limited representation and education in their own language as a result of their service to the empire in 1848. Yet even the Croats began to lose some of their identity over the years in the face of Magyarizationist policies. The suppression of minority language schools, newspapers, and customs took its toll. On top of this atmosphere was an increasing Magyar demand for separation from Austria, led by Francis Kossuth, Lajos' son. In 1905 the younger Kossuth's political party won an overwhelming majority of parliamentary seats, and appeared ready to actually detach Hungary from the alliance. Francis Joseph ended these aspirations by threatening to grant universal manhood suffrage to the kingdom. Kossuth understood that the Magyar oligarchy would be eliminated and so he agreed to cancel plans for separation. This ensured that Magyar control of Hungary would continue.<sup>19</sup>

The murder of the unpopular Habsburg crown prince started the chain of events leading to the First World War. The empire achieved surprising military success in the first year of conflict. It occupied Russian Poland, defeated the Italians at Caporetto and took Serbia after Bulgaria joined their cause. Romania attacked Transylvania in 1916 and was soundly defeated the following year, but by then the burden of war was taking its toll. Hungary supplied proportionately more soldiers than other parts of the empire, and correspondingly suffered more casualties and economic hardship. Despite these problems, the Hungarian parliament remained in power throughout the war, even after

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<sup>19</sup>Craig, pp. 155 - 56, 266 - 67.

the military took effective control of Austrian politics. Tragedy struck in 1916 when Francis Joseph died at age 86. The successor, Charles IV, failed to maintain the same public support for the war garnered by his father. The empire was crumbling.

Hungarian society began to disintegrate in 1917 over discontent with the rising prices and growing shortages caused by the now unpopular war. Numerous strikes occurred, and subjects advocating widespread social reform increased after the successful October Revolution in Russia. Meanwhile the non-Magyar population grew increasingly restless. These people had loyally backed the empire from the first days of the conflict, but the military stalemate and Wilsonian ideals changed their allegiance. The minorities realized that true independence could be a byproduct of the war. When Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire surrendered, Austria-Hungary's defeat became inevitable and was acknowledged with Charles' capitulation on October 27, 1918. The Czechs, Croats, Slovaks and Ruthenians (Carpatho - Ukrainians) seceded within the next three days.<sup>20</sup> This was in line with the tenth of Wilson's famous fourteen points, which stated: "The peoples of Austria - Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development."<sup>21</sup>

On November 16, the Hungarian People's Republic was proclaimed under the regime of Count Mihály Károlyi and his party. Károlyi had won a political struggle with Charles in what is called the Aster Revolution (October 30), owing its name to the red and white asters used to replace royalist emblems on the soldier's uniforms. Attempts to keep Hungary together were unsuccessful, and the Transylvania Romanians joined the Kingdom of Romania. By the beginning of peace talks in January 1919, Hungary had already lost more than half of its former territory and population. A peasant revolt in the countryside added to the Károlyi government's problems, forcing them to institute radical social changes. Károlyi's tenuous political grip gave on March 21. The Workers' and Soldiers' Councils of Budapest declared a Soviet government under a stonemason named Sándor Garbai, with Károlyi's radical political opponent Béla Kun as its real head. The short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic was born.

The great powers refused to accept another socialist government, especially one in the proximity of Western Europe. So, with French assurances of aid, the Romanian Army advanced upon Hungary. A "white" government was simultaneously formed

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<sup>20</sup>Sugar, pp. 291 - 94.

<sup>21</sup>Pounds, p. 475.

under French protection. The "National Army" under Vice Admiral Miklós Horthy was formed by the whites, but was of little consequence.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Béla Kun's only hope rested with Lenin's Red Army, but Lenin was deeply involved in his own civil war and felt his government too weak to risk sending military support.<sup>23</sup> Kun's Revolutionary Governing Council was forced to abdicate, and Budapest and the majority of Hungary were occupied by the Romanian army. A white terror ensued under the national army that now acted independently from the government. During the first three months of this counterrevolution, five thousand people were executed and nearly seventy thousand were interned in camps. The Romanian army also instituted punitive action against the socialist revolutionaries. Chaos engulfed the country.

By the fall of 1919 the great powers began to pressure the parties involved in an effort to get the peace process finished. However, Romania refused to withdraw its troops for several reasons. First, Romania feared that the favorable borders established in the 1916 Bucharest Agreement wouldn't be guaranteed. Second, the government refused to accept treaty clauses guaranteeing minority rights, rejecting them as infringements upon their sovereignty, and finally, the Romanian army was continuing to expropriate food, machinery, transportation equipment and other goods it considered spoils of war. A British diplomatic mission in November 1919 finally established order. The Romanians left in March 1920 and Horthy's national army became the guarantor of law and order under a temporary elected civilian government called the National Assembly.

Public opinion within Hungary was strongly in favor of retaining a monarchy, but the great powers declared that no Habsburg would be acceptable as king. Nevertheless, Hungary was declared to be a kingdom in Law I (1920) of the National Assembly, in an effort to establish continuity and thus legitimacy to the nation's future government. Since the throne could not be filled, the law had a provision dating to medieval times by which the highest office could be held by a regent. Horthy was the only possible candidate. Supported by the army at home and Great Britain abroad, he assumed the position. The former commander in chief of the Imperial Navy was foremost a conservative who feared above all the Soviet Union and revolution. Horthy was an astute politician who remained in control by accommodating the far right while

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<sup>22</sup>Sugar, pp. 295 - 309.

<sup>23</sup>Morton Schwartz, The Foreign Policy of the USSR: Domestic Factors, (Encino, CA: Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), p. 106.

gaining support from the leftists through his strong defense of Hungarian sovereignty in the face of Hitler's Germany. Mainstream Hungarians were also impassioned by Horthy's insistence that Hungary return to its former borders. Since the law creating the regent's office did not stipulate a length of service, over time Horthy was able to persuade the National Assembly to grant him great power, making Horthy a virtual dictator.<sup>24</sup>

While Hungarians fought over politics at home, in Paris their future was being decided. On June 4, 1920, in the Trianon Palace in Versailles, Hungary signed the formal treaty ending the war. Hungary was reduced from 282,000 square miles to 93,000. This translated economically to a loss of 89 percent of its iron production, 84 percent of its forests, 62 percent of its railway network and 44 percent of its food-processing capability.<sup>25</sup> Hungary's population was also substantially reduced. In 1910 the population was 18.25 million of which the Magyars and Szekely made up 54 percent.<sup>26</sup> After Trianon roughly nine million remained, of which 89.5 percent were Magyar.<sup>27</sup> Twenty-eight percent of Hungarian speakers now lived outside the Hungarian state.<sup>28</sup> Trianon represented a national humiliation equal to the Battle of Mohacs in 1526. The discriminatory treatment afforded the Hungarians abroad deepened Hungarian resentment at home. All economic and social problems within Hungary came to be blamed on the unjust treaty, and the main goal of foreign policy became its revision.

The terms agreed to at Trianon also forbade the union of Germany and Austria, called *Anschluss*. In March 1938, Adolph Hitler's Third Reich entered Vienna and the *Anschluss* occurred anyway. Julius Gömbös, an anti-Semite and fascist who became Horthy's premier in 1931, was one of the first foreign officials to court the Nazis.<sup>29</sup> His successors continued the trend out of fear of the USSR. Hungary was officially neutral, but in reality the tentacles of the Third Reich were gaining increasing control of the state. The acquisition of southern Transylvania, the portion lost at Trianon to Romania, was still the prime aim of Budapest's foreign policy. Budapest believed that close association with Hitler could achieve this, and indeed Hungary recovered

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<sup>24</sup>Sugar, pp. 308 - 13.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 314.

<sup>26</sup>Pounds, p. 475.

<sup>27</sup>Ferguson, p. 861.

<sup>28</sup>Sugar, p. 314.

<sup>29</sup>Craig, pp. 431, 461 - 62.

northern Transylvania through the 1940 Second Vienna Award arbitrated by Italy and Germany.<sup>30</sup> However, Hitler had his own agenda, namely the control of the Balkans. Hitler was able to use interstate tensions to convert the entire region into German satellite states.

Hitler's attack upon the Soviet Union in June 1941 prompted Hungary's entry into the war. Troops were sent to the front at first, but were soon withdrawn when the expected "Blitzkrieg" victory turned into a blood bath. This action prompted the Nazis to seek greater influence within Hungary by infiltrating its politics. This move created turmoil but failed to yield the results Hitler expected. More troops were sent into the conflict and were summarily annihilated around Voronezh while trying to support the Germans at Stalingrad in January 1943. Hungary went from being a firm supporter of Hitler to an unwilling satellite. Miklós Kállay, the premier in 1943, with Horthy's approval removed the troops from combat roles and even defied an October 1942 German decree calling for the deportation of Hungary's Jews. Kállay went so far as to order a fair settlement of Hungary's minority problems irrespective of Magyar treatment abroad, but unfortunately his actions were ignored by local authorities.

The National Socialist Party Union, Hitler's political puppet within Hungary, answered Kállay's audacity by attempting to bring down the government. In March 1944 Horthy was forced to surrender effective control over the country to Hitler, or face invasion by all of the surrounding nations whose ancient animosities would wreak havoc upon his nation. Horthy remained as regent and continued to resist German measures, although the atrocities reached their zenith over the ensuing months. When a second front was opened against the remaining Axis powers, Horthy boldly sought a separate peace with Russia. He was too late, for Romania had already given Stalin a regional ally by switching sides and declaring war on Germany only days before. August 1944 marked the arrival of Soviet and Romanian troops on Hungary's border. A flurry of activity that included Horthy's removal and deportation to Germany, the futile resistance to the siege of Budapest by his extreme fascist successors and an orgy of violence preceded the final peace and Soviet occupation in April 1945. The cost of the war for Hungary was terrible, with nearly one half million military casualties alone.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Pounds, p. 475.

<sup>31</sup>Sugar, pp. 339 - 52.

Socialist "democracy" under the shadow of Joseph Stalin followed the war, and Hungary became a full member of the Soviet camp by turning communist in 1947. The post war nation was characterized by a strict, agrarian-based class structure. Virtually no industrial development had occurred since 1918. The communist party responded by remodeling society on the Soviet system. This transformation lasted from June 1948 to August 1949, ending with the adoption of the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic. The process included the collectivization of farming, the expansion of state schooling and welfare institutions, the removal of all "enemies of the people" from responsible positions within the state infrastructure, and the establishment of a one-party system supplemented by trade unions and other mass organizations.<sup>32</sup>

Nikita Khrushchev broke with the Stalinist idea of Sovietization by allowing the communist states in the Eastern Bloc to follow their own paths to socialism. He officially announced this shift in doctrine at the Twentieth Party Congress of February 1956. Hungarians took him at his word and began to openly criticize the socialist regime. October student demonstrations favoring social and political liberties were joined by armed factory workers and disgruntled soldiers. An open revolt ensued, forcing the Soviet command to consider Hungary's demand for neutrality on the Austrian model. Unfortunately for Hungary, the Western powers were engaged elsewhere in the world (the Suez crisis) and gave little support to the revolt. On 4 November, the revolution was ruthlessly crushed by Soviet forces.

The first major step toward ending authoritarian socialism in Hungary came in January 1989, when the rights of assembly and free association were granted. Ironically, it was the people in charge, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP), who were willing to relinquish control in order to foster change. The party went much further in admitting its error in labeling the 1956 uprising a "counterrevolution" when in fact it was a popular uprising against tyranny. In September 1989 the government made an unprecedented decision in allowing thousands of East German tourists to enter West Germany. By playing a pivotal role in German unification, the Hungarians hoped to gain German assistance in their post-communist affairs. Hungary's move had the added benefit of enhancing its image in the West. The Hungarian communist party's move led to the downfall of East Germany's government, but it was not enough to repair its own image. Due to intra-party politics, the HSWP

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<sup>32</sup>Peter A. Toma, Socialist Authority: The Hungarian Experience. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988), pp. xix - xxv.

members were asked to re-enroll in the party. Only four percent of the members re-joined in what was tantamount to an extraordinary vote of no confidence.<sup>33</sup>

The citizens of Hungary had dreamed about the collapse of communism and independence from Soviet control for decades. The end was expected to be quite exciting, but their predictions were wrong. "On 23 October 1989, a number of fat, middle-aged men with dead eyes pressed buttons saying 'Yes,' thereby voting themselves out of political existence."<sup>34</sup> Today's evidence suggests that the politicians acted as they did in exchange for money from West Germany, which was desperately needed to help offset Budapest's huge debt. In any case, elections were held on the thirty-third anniversary of the 1956 revolution and today's Hungarian Republic was born.<sup>35</sup>

## **2. Hungarian Culture and Society**

Hungarian society differs dramatically from its European counterparts, both East and West. Hungary acted as a bulwark against the Moslems for centuries until their defeat at Mohacs in 1526. Therefore, unlike the East, they were exposed to influences such as the Renaissance and Reformation. Yet they were untouched by the economic revolution of the seventeenth century. In the Middle Ages power was the result of inherited positions in society, and wealth derived from power. The accumulation of capital through mining, banking, and money-lending (formerly forbidden by the Church) resulted in a new attitude toward investment. In Western Europe, a rising middle class understood that money in itself equated to power and therefore large numbers of people sought personal wealth. The Ottoman Empire effectively shielded its European populace from these economic innovations. As a result, the nobility in Hungary did not have to contend with this rising bourgeoisie (or middle class), and was therefore more firmly entrenched than its Western counterpart. Without a bourgeoisie to politically challenge the nobility, the landed gentry ruled the nation. Twentieth century communism finally altered this social structure, but remnants of it still exist within modern Hungary.

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<sup>33</sup>Charles Gati, The Bloc That Failed: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 39 - 43, 170 - 75.

<sup>34</sup>Norman Stone, "The Hungarians: History Makes a Comeback," The National Interest, Summer 1994, p. 59.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.



The peasantry accounted for four-fifths of Hungarian society in the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The peasants were under the institution of serfdom until their official emancipation in 1848, which was finally realized in 1853.<sup>37</sup> Serfs were subject to the authority of their landlords and had no political or civil rights yet they were taxed and subject to military service. The Enlightenment failed to reach the peasant class. These people continued to operate based upon a "deeply internalized set of values derived from centuries of tradition and contemporary structural constraints."<sup>38</sup> The peasant world was extremely insular, generating a conditioned mistrust of outsiders. Their limited political ideas were based mainly upon religious precepts. World War I significantly affected peasant politics because it revealed to these people the importance of agricultural production to the state. Hence this class brought with it some basic characteristics when it entered the political arena: a self-confident quest for a greater standard of living reinforced by the mistrust of outsiders and a religious outlook.<sup>39</sup>

The other legal class of the eighteenth century, the nobility, included ecclesiastical as well as lay aristocrats. This class was only composed of about 200 families which accounted for four to five percent of the population.<sup>40</sup> The different levels of nobility lived at greatly differing levels of wealth and social position, although in theory they were all equal. The main ambition of this ruling class was originally to perpetuate its feudal privileges and safeguard its ancient traditions. However, the lower nobility became increasingly aware of the equalizing power of money, and thus fostered an interest in modernization, better marketing and knowledge of the outside world in general. The chasm between the higher and lower nobility became more acute, but neither side became engines of reform.<sup>41</sup>

Those of the lower nobility who wanted social change (and a corresponding elevation in their own social status) and displayed other traditionally bourgeois attitudes tended to shy away from capitalism and its associated risks for fear of losing the little social status they held, and instead turned to the intellectual class as a means to bring about change. Authoritarian rule further hampered the development of a true

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<sup>36</sup>Domokos Kosáry, *Culture and Society in Eighteenth Century Hungary*, trans. Zsuzsa Béres, (Budapest: Corvina, 1987), p. 22.

<sup>37</sup>Sugar, p. 237.

<sup>38</sup>George Schöpflin, *Politics in Eastern Europe 1945 - 1992*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p. 26.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 25 - 29.

<sup>40</sup>Kosáry, p. 30.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 29 - 33.

entrepreneurial class. Since those with capital (the local nobility) refused to gamble on economic endeavors, risk-takers had to be imported. The Jews from Ukraine became the capitalists of Eastern Europe. Given the peasant propensity for mistrusting outsiders and the nobility's fear of monetary equality, it is little surprise that these Jews were not accepted and their values remained alien. This alienness was later applied to all entrepreneurs, whether Jewish or not, even in Hungary, where the Jews were relatively assimilated by language, culture and custom. The result is that "this state of affairs contributed materially to a deep-rooted, persistent hostility to entrepreneurial values of risk-taking, the market, competition, democracy [and] change. The structural weakness of the East European bourgeoisie contributed significantly to a corresponding weakness in the conceptions of modernity, attitudes to change and the institutions that would mediate between society and state."<sup>42</sup>

The intelligentsia developed within Hungary as a small yet important social segment. As said before, a large portion of this group came from the lower nobility who wanted modernization, or who were noble by birth but not by affluence. The total number (without family members) was 15,000 - 20,000.<sup>43</sup> The clergy was responsible for educating and indeed employing most intellectuals. However, the enlightened nobility replaced the clergy's function by the mid-eighteenth century, and a cadre of professionals capable of manning the various scientific and bureaucratic fields was established by 1900. The political role of the intelligentsia is characterized as oppositional or revolutionary. Since this class was dependent upon the state for its livelihood, and the state in turn feared its economic potential and challenge to its power, a compromise was made. The intelligentsia was given a secondary position beneath the nobility in the hierarchy of power. "The intellectual minority, frustrated and resentful in its sense of failure, went on to form the ideologies of left and right extremes which were in this sense and this sense only, united by a vision of total, radical change. In this respect the radical minority could contribute to establishing the limits of debate and, to some extent, setting the agenda for the remainder of the intellectual community."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Schöpflin, p. 33.

<sup>43</sup>Kosáry, p. 37.

<sup>44</sup>Schöpflin, p. 31.

Religious preference constitutes another social cleavage within Hungary. The Catholic Church was the dominant religion for centuries owing to Saint Stephen. The Church was a pedestal upon which Habsburg power rested; and so the Catholics, relying on Habsburg power, did everything possible to defeat the rise of Protestantism. Their efforts were fruitless, and today the diversity of religion within Hungary is a testament to this fact. The lands incorporated by the Hungarian kingdom included worshipers of the Orthodox and Uniate churches of the various nationalities. However, since the treaty of Trianon in 1920, only the majority Protestants (Calvinist or Lutheran) and Catholics remain in any number.

Hungary had developed no appreciable working class by the close of World War II. The industry that did exist was based on "low technology" such as food processing or construction. When rapid industrialization occurred under communism, a newly recruited proletariat from the peasantry dwarfed and incorporated the tiny pre-war industrial work force. The advent of communism drastically altered the shape of society in other ways as well. The HSWP officially recognized three "friendly" classes: the workers, the peasants, and the intelligentsia - all cooperating in the process of socialist production. Officials sought to suppress the traditional Hungarian culture during the Stalinization process in the early 1950s and again after the 1956 insurrection. The pre-war intellectuals were either deprived of their positions or phased out with age, so that a new intelligentsia (comprised of graduates from the communist educational system who now occupy positions in the government and service sector) formulated its identity in the sociopolitical influences of the post-war world. This class is rising, constituting twenty-eight percent of the wage earners in 1981, representing a 25.8 percent increase in one decade.<sup>45</sup>

On the other hand, nearly all Hungarians remained in touch with some aspects of their traditional culture under communism, mainly through the village. There are only seven cities within Hungary that have a population over 100,000 and only Budapest (2,540,000) tops Miskolc at 211,645.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the great majority of people live in small towns and hamlets. In 1985, only 19.5 percent of the population lived in Budapest, 43.6 percent lived in villages and 36.9 percent in small towns.<sup>47</sup> A 1986

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<sup>45</sup>Toma, p. 226.

<sup>46</sup>Rand McNally Universal World Atlas, New Revised Edition, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1987), p. 243.

<sup>47</sup>Toma, p. 228.

study by Hans-Georg Heinrich revealed that all occupational groups are affected by this trend. Forty-six percent of the Blue-collar workers lived in villages as well as 83.5 percent of the collective peasantry, 25.8 percent of the white collar workers, and 60.3 percent of the small commodity producers lived there as well.<sup>48</sup>

However, it would be misleading to imply that the village life remained unchanged under socialism. The social structure can no longer be differentiated in terms of a peasant and working class. Families are often intermixed, with one spouse working in industry while another farms, and the economic reforms in the late 1960s created great stratification within the classes themselves. "Thus, the background and experiences of the younger generations in villages are different, and consequently they have ambitions and aspirations other than those of older generations."<sup>49</sup>

### **3. Hungarian Strategic Culture**

Many specific findings about Hungarian strategic culture can be gleaned from the preceding survey of that nation's history and society. The following is a list and short discussion of the relevant findings. Once again, these factors are not necessarily the driving forces behind specific Hungarian policies. They may, however, help to explain Budapest's behavior and enable us to better assess future prospects.

#### **a. Belief that they are a Western European nation.**

The Hungarians firmly believe that the forty-four years during which they were associated with the Eastern European nations while a member of the Soviet Bloc was a historical discontinuity. Their early acceptance of Roman Catholicism, their position as a defensive barrier against the Mongol and Turkish (at least for a while) incursions, their pursuit of enlightened reforms after the Napoleonic era (reflected in the 1848 revolution) while part of the Austrian Empire, and the Germanic influence from the Empire are all considered evidence of Hungary's Western orientation.

This theory disregards contrary facts such as the late date at which feudal institutions such as serfdom were abolished, the impact of the Ottomans, and the lack of industrialization and liberalism until the twentieth century. However, in cultural study it is perceptions that count, and the Hungarians are convinced that they belong in

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<sup>48</sup>Hans-Gorg Heinrich, Hungary (London: Frances Pinter, 1986), p. 106, as reprinted in Toma, p. 228.

<sup>49</sup>Toma, p. 228.

the West and should be promptly admitted to institutions such as NATO and the European Union.

**b. Calvinist religion a distinguishing factor.**

Calvinism dominates politics, despite its being the religion practiced by only one third of the population.<sup>50</sup> Calvinism came to embody certain distinctive ideas of Protestant faith, including the concept of *predestination*. The Calvinist history of challenging authority and formerly accepted ideas promotes skepticism in political thought. The Hungarian public's reaction to government edicts is cautious, analytical, and skeptical. That is, government programs are critically evaluated rather than blindly accepted out of deference to their official source. Hungarian Protestantism encourages intellectual opposition and debate within the Magyar society. Therefore, the ability to shape public opinion becomes an important factor for Budapest when dealing with issues deemed vital to the average citizen, such as Transylvania and Magyar rights abroad. The importance of this factor is made clearer by contrasting it with the Romanian Orthodox faith's traditional subservience to authority, and the lack of public outcry over perceived injustice (at least by the majority of the citizens).

**c. Hungary is surrounded by antagonistic states and nations.**

Hungary has been at odds with its neighbors since the middle ages. This is really a result of its own attempts to subjugate the other nations within the region, from Saint Stephen's kingdom until World War II. Particular animosities resulted from Magyar-dominated governance and Magyarization policies during the Dual Monarchy. The experiences after World War I, especially Trianon, and during World War II validated this sentiment. Hungary must carefully weigh any and all diplomatic actions it takes as a result. Every state must take into account possible counter-reactions of the international community when deciding upon a course of action, but Hungary is surrounded by states which continue to hold a grudge against the Magyars. This forces Hungary to be extremely sensitive to regional concerns. This effectively limits Budapest's choices in foreign affairs. Hungary's quest for physical security is also affected by regional attitudes. The prospects for help or intervention from its neighbors in a crisis are questionable, so the state is placed in a position whereby it must rely

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<sup>50</sup>Stone, p. 63.

upon its own strength, or seek support from friends outside Southeastern Europe. NATO, the European Union and other Western institutions are a logical source of allies since the Magyars consider themselves a historical Western European "island" in the East.

**d. Pessimistic attitude toward the intentions and capabilities of government.**

Hungarian history reveals a thousand years of turmoil, with the state usually on the receiving end of disaster. There are very few positive events for the nation to take pride in. Hungary has a short history of independence with a mixed track record at best. It is a nation that has never won an enduring victory in war. There is little substance to the pomp and ceremony of statehood, for Hungary has never been a great power in its own right. The Dual Monarchy, of which Hungary was theoretically an equal partner, was the feeblest of the great powers. Hungarian citizens are patriotic. For example, a survey in 1982 showed that 92.4 percent of Hungarians reported a "deep emotion when the anthem was played"<sup>51</sup> (although the survey was taken during communism, perhaps artificially inflating the results). Yet they expect very little in return from their government.<sup>52</sup> Even the best intended policies of the central government have at times been sabotaged by local authorities. Finally, one of the primary legacies of communism was the destruction of traditional institutions, already distrusted in Hungary, and the replacement of these institutions with new ones of foreign (Russian) design. Communism's collapse cast a negative shadow upon all of the achievements during the communist period, including personal careers. This effectively discredited most institutions, which are still operated by professional bureaucrats.<sup>53</sup>

This attitude leads to government instability. Hungary's ruling elite must be concerned about maintaining popular support in order to remain in power (like all democratically elected officials), as shown in the June 1994 election defeat of the conservatives at the hands of the socialists (mostly former communists). Political leaders can not deviate too far from popular preferences without losing support. Attempts at changing public opinion are often rejected out of hand by the public. This discourages the government from embarking upon bold new initiatives to solve

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<sup>51</sup>Toma, p. 237.

<sup>52</sup>Stone, p. 58.

<sup>53</sup>Schöpflin, p. 274 - 75.

Hungary's current dilemmas. The politicians must overcome their inglorious past and devote more energy to attaining respect and legitimacy rather than tackling the issues at hand. Finally, the distrust of Budapest's intentions can at times manifest itself in the refusal of citizens to obey official orders. The central government is therefore not in total control of the nation's future. The ability to subvert or disregard laws enacted by Budapest at the local level of government means that unpopular policies, no matter how enlightened, may not be implemented at all. A government whose demands are not adhered to by its electorate is unlikely to govern for long.

**e. Belief that they are generally non-discriminatory.**

The cosmopolitan nature of Hungary vanished after Trianon and the state became one of the most homogenous nations of Eastern Europe (only 10% of the nation was non-Magyar).<sup>54</sup> Oppression and Magyarization of the Hungarian minorities was the reality of the Hungarian Kingdom. However, time has given the nation over six decades to forget its past mistakes. Today, the people point to their "protection" of the Jews during the Nazi Holocaust, and the Hungarian parliament's recent passing of a comprehensive law granting minorities collective rights<sup>55</sup> as proof of their benevolence. This disregards the resurfacing of anti-Semitic feelings within Hungary that either always was an underlying problem, or is a result of the social and economic upheaval with the corresponding urge to exonerate the state's responsibility through a "scapegoat" group.<sup>56</sup>

Hungarian officials tend to forget their nation's own historical transgressions when dealing with Romania, and see the minority rights issue in black and white terms with Bucharest always playing the part of the villain. Romania, on the other hand, has not forgotten how the Magyars treated ethnic Romanians and other minorities in Hungary when they fell under Budapest's rule. Bucharest therefore interprets Hungary's championing of minority rights as political posturing rather than a fundamental cultural value. Each of the two governments continues to misunderstand the motivations behind its counterpart's actions in ethnic dealings as a result. This

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<sup>54</sup>Bennett Kovrig, "Hungarian Minorities in East-Central Europe," Occasional Paper Series of the Atlantic Council of the United States, March 1994, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup>Edith Oltay, "Hungary Passes Law on Minority Rights," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 2, No. 44, 5 Nov 93, p. 58.

<sup>56</sup>Michael Shafir, "Anti-Semitism Without Jews in Romania," RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe, Vol. 2, No. 26, 28 June 1991, p. 29.

makes it extremely difficult to find areas of mutual agreement from which to improve current relations.

**f. Tradition of foreign powers influencing domestic politics.**

Hungarian policy and lifestyle were dominated by the Germanic-minded Holy Roman Emperors and their Habsburg successors for centuries. The Dual Monarchy gave Budapest a say in local affairs by means of a veto power, but Vienna still set the domestic agenda. Independence finally made Hungary totally responsible for its own actions. However, the state soon allied with the Axis powers and Hungary became a veritable puppet of the Third Reich. Soviet domination was the ultimate expression of foreign influence. The end of the Soviet empire has left Hungary without allies for the first time. Already it has sought to join the European Union and other associations. Perhaps close ties with democratic regimes will positively influence future state decisions.

**g. Belief in a strong bond between Magyars at home and abroad.**

The number of Magyar and Szekely people residing outside Hungary will reach 3,430,000 by the year 2000.<sup>57</sup> "Some values are so vital for national security and survival that they are in fact national interests requiring protection and defense."<sup>58</sup> At least some segments of the Hungarian population would argue that the livelihood of Magyars abroad is of national interest, including citizens in policy making positions. Lajos Fur, then Hungarian Minister of Defense, in 1992 regarded the safeguarding of Magyars abroad as an "inseparable facet" of national security.<sup>59</sup> Much of this sentiment derives from the perceived humiliation suffered at Trianon and the yearning to re-acquire lost greatness in the form of territory. However, perceived kinship is also important. The plight of the Magyars abroad will remain important to Hungary's national interest as long as this perception of kinship endures and the state remains democratic.

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<sup>57</sup> Dávid Zoltán, "Statistics: The Hungarians and Their Neighbors, 1851 - 2000," in The Hungarians: A Divided Nation, ed. Stephen Borsody, (New Haven: Yale Center For International and Area Studies, 1988), p. 345.

<sup>58</sup> Adda B. Bozeman, "U.S. Foreign Policy and the Prospects for Democracy, National Security and World Peace," in Comparative Strategy, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1985, p. 223.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Shafir, "Transylvania Shadows, Transylvania Lights," RFE-RL Research Report, Vol. 1, No. 26, 26 June 1992, p. 29.



#### **h. The importance of the village.**

The exact cultural impact the village has upon society is hard to determine after Sovietization. Certainly some of the traditional ways of thinking were retained under communism, especially given the widespread disillusionment that became apparent towards the end of HSWP rule. However, other traditional ideas have given way. Social mobility, unheard of in the old agrarian economy, is now possible by commuting to work while maintaining residence in the village. The secondary economy that developed in the late communist period suggests a mellowing of animosity toward entrepreneurship,<sup>60</sup> and the younger generation advocates change instead of resisting it. Yet the village remains at the very least, a link with history and Hungary's cultural roots.

Some of these cultural traits are detrimental to the conduct of successful international relations. The age-old fear of village outsiders, represented by the central government and foreign nations in modern times, makes it difficult to change popular attitudes built up over time. Hungary openly sought to regain Transylvania and other past glories for decades, and Romania has been considered a regional adversary for centuries. These ideas have become ingrained in the Hungarian psyche. The government can not erase these attitudes over night, if at all. A population that is wary of its own leadership will be apt to retain traditional ways of thinking rather than to embrace new ones, especially after undergoing a de-sovietization process so recently.

### **B. ROMANIA**

#### **1. An Overview of Romania's History**

From the first days of nation-building, "Romanian identity was linked with history."<sup>61</sup> As a result, history and politics have become so intertwined over time that they are virtually inseparable today. Even the origins of Romania evoke heated debate. There are three schools of thought. The "Latinist" camp asserts that modern Romanians are the descendants of the Roman Emperor Trajan's Dacian legions and colonists. The "Dacianists" believe they are the direct descendants of the original Dacian inhabitants who adopted some of the Roman civilization, including Latin, but who lack Roman

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 31.

bloodlines. The most widely accepted view is a combination of the two, in which Romanians are a mingling of the two cultures.<sup>62</sup> Regardless, the first Romanian states, Wallachia and Moldavia, were established by the *vlachs* (Romanians) around 1300 after several centuries during which their whereabouts are unknown.<sup>63</sup> Transylvania, which modern Romanians consider their third historic province, was by that time part of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>64</sup> The *voevods* (princes) of the time were primarily concerned with avoiding Magyar rule and not Romanian unification as some revisionists have attempted to claim. By the fifteenth century self preservation through the maintenance of the existing social order was the only concern of the region, but Turkish suzerainty could not be avoided.<sup>65</sup>

The Ottoman Turks gained control of Moldavia and Wallachia during the fourteenth century. Romanians thus occupied the extreme Northwest of the Ottoman Empire, a position that proved to be very advantageous. The great distance from Anatolia spared the Romanians from excessive central control. The Turks relied upon local lords (*hospodars*) of their choosing, usually Phanariote Greeks or local aristocracy, to enforce order instead of building villages and military outposts. The Romanian principalities were maintained by the Empire to help feed Constantinople.<sup>66</sup>

During this period very few ethnic minorities lived in Moldavia and Wallachia. These people were treated tolerantly, even though they had no political rights as foreigners.<sup>67</sup> However, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed the influx of Romanies (Gypsies) in Eastern Europe from India. Most settled on the outskirts of established villages. The men found work as farmhands, smiths, and musicians while the women acted as servants.<sup>68</sup> Meanwhile, the conditions of the Romanian peasant were worsening. Caught in constant international turmoil between the great states, the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia had made decisions over time reducing the peasants

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<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>Stephen Fischer-Galati, *Twentieth Century Rumania*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 10.

<sup>64</sup>Michael Shafir, *Romania: Politics, Economics and Society*, (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1985), p. 1.

<sup>65</sup>Fischer-Galati, *Twentieth Century Romania*, p. 10 - 11.

<sup>66</sup>Pounds, p. 530.

<sup>67</sup>Matei Cazacu, National Center for Scientific Research in Paris, as reported in "Roundtable: Transylvania's Past and Future," ed. Michael Shafir and Alfred A. Reisch, *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 24, 11 June 1993, p. 28.

<sup>68</sup>Sharon Fisher, "Romanies in Slovakia," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 42, 22 Oct. 1993, p. 54.

to serfdom. Modern "nationalists" look to this period as the birth of "Greater Romania." Military campaigns against "foreign" enemies occurred, but they were not carried out in hopes of liberating all Romanians. Rather, they were fought out of necessity against the Russians, Ottomans, Greeks, Hungarians and other states who wanted to dominate the region.

Michael the Brave, a sixteenth century Wallachian voevod, is seen by many as the first nationalist hero. He temporarily united the three traditional territories in a war against the Turks and their vassals, the Magyar princes of Hungary. It appears that Michael was fighting for personal power, and actually worsened the condition of Romanians, including legalizing serfdom. Meanwhile, the masses apparently fought to protect their few remaining legal rights and possessions, not for any idealistic cause.<sup>69</sup>

Transylvania took a different historical path. Romanians in Transylvania, contrary to Romanian nationalist theories, did not yearn to join the other states in a Greater Romania. These people were dissatisfied with their inferior position to their Magyar and German lords, but realized that life under the voevods would be worse.<sup>70</sup> "Until the 18th Century, there was no [ethnic] problem of Transylvania and of the situation of Romanians there."<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, these Romanians received Western influences as a result of their association with the Hungarian and Habsburg empires, including the Reformation. Transylvanian Romanians were isolated from the other state's historical experience and were indifferent to their distant brethren's problems. Therefore, their emerging concerns in the late eighteenth century were understandably unique.<sup>72</sup>

From the late eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth Century, Transylvanian Romanians began demanding equality with the other two ethnic powers, the Germans and Magyars. These 3 million people began to consider themselves a distinct community rather than simply members of the cosmopolitan empire.<sup>73</sup> By the nineteenth century, intellectuals from all three provinces cultivated nationalist sentiment. These men were strongly influenced by the French Enlightenment. Their realization that Romania, like France, had been part of the Roman Empire provided a foundation from which nationalism grew. It was at this time that the Daco-Romanian

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<sup>69</sup>Fischer-Galati, *Twentieth Century Romania*, pp. 11 - 12.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>71</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:...", p. 30.

<sup>72</sup>Fischer-Galati, *Twentieth Century Rumania*, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>73</sup>Gustav Molnar, of the Central European Institute in Budapest, "Roundtable:...", pp. 27 - 28.

theory of national origins was born. The theory implied Slav and Magyar barbarism, which dovetailed well with the Romanians' impulse to denigrate their traditional enemies. The rediscovery of their Latin origins coincided with the formation of the first true Romanian state.

During the eighteenth century Russian influence in the Balkans slowly replaced that of Turkey. The Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji in 1774 made the Tsar the official protector of Christians within the Ottoman Empire. Romania became an important object of Russian foreign policy designs because it represented a foothold near the Turkish Straits. By the nineteenth century, Romania was still legally ruled by the Turkish Sultan, but in reality the Tsar held effective control. In 1821, the hospodors ceased being Greeks from the Phanar quarter of Constantinople and henceforth were native Romanians. In 1859 Moldavia and Wallachia were joined, creating the United Principalities. This resulted from a Crimean War compromise reached between Great Britain, France, and Russia concerning the Balkan question. The United Principalities were not officially a single state. Each maintained its own prince and parliament, but a commission was created to decide matters of joint interest. However, the Romanians outfoxed the Great Powers, who wanted two separate territories for geo-political reasons, by electing Alexander Cuza head of both principalities. On 23 December 1861, Prince Cuza proclaimed the union of the two, and Romania was established. Cuza's reign was short lived. In 1866, Cuza's crown was offered to Prince Charles, a member of the Prussian Hohenzollern family, at the forceful urging of Otto von Bismark. Charles, known as Carol in Romania, ruled the nation until his death in 1914.<sup>74</sup>

Transylvania's 326 year old parliament was abolished by the liberal Hungarian state in 1867, creating a unitary province with one official language and university in its wake, namely Hungarian. This "winner take all" attitude toward democracy fostered ethnic tension.<sup>75</sup> A new Russo-Turkish War occurred in 1877 and added to the fledgling state's troubles. The Romanians greatly contributed to the war effort by allowing Russian troops upon their territory. The Russians responded to this help by

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<sup>74</sup>Pounds, pp. 530 - 32.

<sup>75</sup>Molnar, "Roundtable:..."

annexing the legally and ethnically Romanian territories of southern Bessarabia. This loss became the driving force for Romania's entrance into World War I.<sup>76</sup>

Early Romanian nationalism was characterized by a physical struggle against the Turks and an intellectual one against the dominance of Slavonic and then Greek arts. The movement began in Transylvania and spread south, focusing on the development of Romanian language and literature to offset foreign influences.<sup>77</sup> In all three Romanian regions, the transformation was marked by the fall of the nobility in the face of a growing central power. The decline of agriculture and corresponding rise in manufacturing also removed the nobility's traditional power base, forcing them to assimilate with the rising bourgeoisie and bureaucratic class which in turn led the national movement.<sup>78</sup>

The 'Old Kingdom' before 1918 had practically no minorities. Only the Jewish population was discriminated against, since Christianity was required for citizenship.<sup>79</sup> In 1913, Romania acquired southern Dobruja from Bulgaria in the Second Balkan War. The Russian Revolution gave Romanians in Bessarabia a chance to rejoin their ethnic brothers, which they did, and *România Mare* (Greater Romania) was achieved after the First World War.<sup>80</sup>

The first diplomatic efforts of the World War I belligerents were aimed at persuading Italy and lesser states, notably Romania, to take part in the conflict. Romania resisted these attempts and declared its neutrality on 4 August 1914, just a few days before hostilities began. Romania had been an ally of Austria-Hungary and Germany since 1883, but the former state's refusal to address repeated complaints about the conditions of Romanians residing in Transylvania undermined the treaty. Meanwhile, the Russians and their allies saw a great advantage in Romania's participation. They envisioned a potential revolt of Romanians within Hungary, and the tying down of several Austro-Hungarian divisions along that axis at a minimum. Finally, French financial aid, Russian pressure, and most importantly, a secret promise

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<sup>76</sup>Michael Shafir, Romania: Politics, Economics and Society, (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1985), pp. 2 - 3.

<sup>77</sup>Lloyd A. Cohen, "The Jewish Question During the Period of the Romanian National Renaissance and the Unification of the Two Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia 1848-1866," in Romania Between East and West: Historical Essays in Memory of Constantin C. Giurescu, ed. Stephen Fischer-Gilati, Radu R. Florescu and George R. Ursul (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 195.

<sup>78</sup>Verdery, National Ideology... p. 41.

<sup>79</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." p. 30.

<sup>80</sup>Shafir, Romania... p. 3.

to take Transylvania from Hungary overrode Carol's family ties; and Romania entered the war.<sup>81</sup> Romanian troops attacked in August 1916 and were subsequently overrun by forces from Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, which occupied Bucharest in December. The Treaty of Bucharest, signed in May 1918, forced Romania to cede all territory that provided a tactical advantage to the defense of the country. However, Romania's enemies were forced to surrender within a year.<sup>82</sup>

The provinces of Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina became sovereign Romanian territory as a result of the Treaty of Trianon, which was discussed earlier. This effectively doubled the size of Romania overnight. One side effect of this doubling in geographic size was a new multi-cultural population. 28.5 percent of the citizens were now non-Romanian "at the very time when the Romanian nation-state was creating its own national identity and what it meant to be Romanian."<sup>83</sup>

In 1919 Romania signed a treaty in Saint-Germain guaranteeing the rights and citizenship of all the minorities acquired in the former Austro-Hungarian lands.<sup>84</sup> Despite these assurances, the government began to deflect public animosity over worsening economic conditions toward the minorities in an effort to distance themselves from responsibility. Traditional enemies, like Hungary and Russia, as well as their corresponding ethnic groups in Romania, were blamed for all of Romania's post-war problems. Romanian patriotism, already founded upon hatred for neighboring states which had sought to subdue Romanian nationalism in the past, came to be associated with ethnic discrimination as a result. This set a precedent that has continued to the present, and has become such a central facet of the Romanian psyche that it may be impossible to reverse.

The inter-war years were not particularly stable either. "Romania's problems in the immediate post-war years may be ascribed ultimately to the unwillingness of the Bucharest politicians to provide adequate formulae for national and international reconciliation."<sup>85</sup> The events leading to and during the Second World War brought another round of change to the infant government. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu founded a Romanian fascist movement called the Legion of Archangel Saint Michael in 1927.

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<sup>81</sup>James Joll, The Origins of the First World War, Second Edition. (New York: Longman, 1992), pp. 35, 65, 149.

<sup>82</sup>Pounds, p. 535.

<sup>83</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:...", p. 30.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup>Fischer-Galati, Twentieth Century Romania, p. 29.

Renamed the Iron Guard in 1930, this movement was not an imitation of German or Italian models but rather a home-grown philosophy based on an "idealized past, sanctified by the bond of 'blood and soil,' as embodied by the peasantry and founded in religion."<sup>86</sup> This extreme movement gained widespread support in the face of a series of national embarrassments, namely the dismantling of the Guard's beloved Greater Romania.

Most of the territories gained at Vienna after World War I were lost once again due to German and Soviet designs. In September 1940 the National-Legionary State was established under Marshal Antonescu with the help of Horia Sima, the Iron Guard's second leader. A failed coup in January 1941 by Sima resulted in the Guard's expulsion from Romania,<sup>87</sup> but its existence continued as an SS puppet in Germany until the war's end. Antonescu's government was typically violent, marked by many pogroms and the ultimate exile of 300,000 Jews to Transdnistria (the barren lands between the Dniester and Bug rivers), where most perished.<sup>88</sup> Antonescu's brand of nationalism continued to foster the notion of Romanians being a besieged nation that must be ever wary of the "foreigner's" true intentions. Antonescu's rule ended on August 23, 1944, with the return of King Michael to power, after he defeated his father, Carol II, in a palace coup. Romania summarily switched sides in the war, but the anti-minority attitudes, particularly against the Jews, continued.<sup>89</sup>

Communism was attractive to the ethnic minorities in Romania in the early days. These people were drawn to the idea of equality in a government that disregarded nationality in favor of the socialist man. As a result, five of the first six Party Secretaries were non-Romanians. The Romanian Communist Party (RCP) would never have gained power without Soviet intervention, since the public at large rejected its minority makeup. These facts are often cited by today's Romanian nationalists as proof that the communist system was an alien system forced upon them by the ethnic minorities with the help of the Soviets. Minorities continued to be a large faction in the RCP until the mid-1950s, when Gheorghiu-Dej's pro-ethnic Romanian faction finally

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<sup>86</sup>Shafir, *Romania*... p. 8.

<sup>87</sup>Michael Shafir, "Anti-Semitism Without Jews in Romania," *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, Vol. 2, No. 26, 28 June 1991, pp. 20 - 21.

<sup>88</sup>Siegfried Jagendorf, *Jagendorf's Foundry: Memoir of the Romanian Holocaust, 1941 - 44*. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), p. iv.

<sup>89</sup>Shafir, "Anti-Semitism..." p. 21.

took control.<sup>90</sup> Prime Minister Petru Groza's administration (1945 - 52) had been tolerant of the minorities in the wake of the war, but 1956 saw the introduction and gradual increase of nationalist policies once again in response to the Hungarian uprising.<sup>91</sup> A policy of "ethnic purification" started with the deportation of thousands of ethnic-Germans and the continued persecution of the other peoples, including a general policy of intimidation and police terror.<sup>92</sup> Dej's Stalinist tactics continued until his death in March 1965, nearly a decade after Stalinism had been denounced by the USSR.

Nicolae Ceausescu then took the reins of leadership. The 'Ceausescu Era' saw the intensification of "appeals to chauvinistic sentiment to gain popular support in the face of deteriorating economic conditions. [He] propounded the myth of Romanian cultural superiority in an effort to create national cohesion."<sup>93</sup> Romania was the only communist country in which National Communism was not just a phase, but the main legitimizing factor of the government. This demonstrates how powerful a force nationalism is to the Romanian people. "Romanianization" of the ethnic minorities began in earnest through the combining of educational, social and cultural activities as a way of phasing out the minority's own cultural heritage.<sup>94</sup>

Huge parades in honor of Ceausescu and communism were a part of Romanian life for years. The censorship of the media and the seemingly omnipotent secret police (*Securitate*) stifled all resistance to the regime. It is estimated that one out of every eight Romanian citizens was associated with the Securitate.<sup>95</sup> This is why Ceausescu was shocked by a spontaneous demonstration in Timisoara. Laszlo Tokes, a reverend of the Calvinist Reformed Church, had earlier granted an interview for Hungarian television in which he criticized the government of Romania. This interview was rebroadcast into Romania, and so the authorities harassed and eventually decided to deport the reverend. It was in his defense that a crowd grew in defiance of the authorities on 15 December 1989, and days of rioting ensued. Five days later

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<sup>90</sup>Verdery, *National Ideology...*, pp. 104 - 05.

<sup>91</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation Status," in *Hearing Before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-Ninth Congress, 2nd Session*, 26 Feb. 1986, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, KF26.S38v.99 No. 29), p. 157.

<sup>92</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:...", p. 28.

<sup>93</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation Status," p. 157.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 212.

<sup>95</sup>Robert Cullen, "Report From Romania: Down With The Tyrant," *The New Yorker*, 2 April 1990, p. 100.



Ceausescu appeared on Romanian television chastising Tokes' supporters. He scheduled a state counter-demonstration in support of the state, but this move backfired. The Bucharest parade members also broke into defiance of Ceausescu. Open rebellion followed, earning Romania the distinction of being the only East European communist state to collapse in violence. On 21 December Ceausescu fled, but was later captured, tried and shot. Ion Iliescu and his political party, the Popular Front, took control of the nation.<sup>96</sup>

The revolution of December 1989 heralded the end of Ceausescu and communism in Romania, but left the successors with some unenviable legacies. The tradition of nationalized politics continues as before, while the intensified mistreatment of minorities in the last 30 years has led to even sharper cleavages in society. The already romanticized (and often distorted) version of popular history was further muddled by the communists, who taught several generations of Romanians to fear their neighbors. Finally, the people were trained to believe in simplistic solutions (in Marxist dogma), that there is a single problem and a single answer. This black and white view of the world leads to misunderstanding and mistrust in others' intentions. Meanwhile, the minorities "are bound to perceive the state as having been ethnicized [in the face of Romanianization], whether in reality this is so or not."<sup>97</sup>

## **2. Romanian Culture and Society**

The institutions in pre-twentieth century Romanian society were similar to those found in Hungary. The aristocracy's power stemmed from land ownership. The lack of a middle class deprived the peasants of political leadership and fostered economic backwardness. Romania and Hungary were both traditional farming states whose usual purpose was to feed the Empires that governed them, and both states were traumatized by the forced social renovation under communism. However, there are differences in the two experiences as well.

Romanians, unlike their Magyar counterparts, occupied the lowest rung in the social ladder for centuries. The foreign nobility considered ethnic Romanians as nothing more than serfs. For example, serf and *ruman* (Romanian) held the same meaning in the Wallach idiom. Some Romanians managed to avoid serfdom. These people lived in communal villages that also hampered individual autonomy and lacked

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., pp. 94 - 106.

<sup>97</sup>Schopflin, "Rondtable:..." p. 27.

entrepreneurial incentives.<sup>98</sup> The rapid industrialization of Romania contributed to the decline of the village's status. The percentage of the population employed by the agricultural sector dropped from 75 percent in 1950 to less than 30 percent by the 1980s. This decline was accompanied by a 25 percent decrease in the population residing outside of cities.<sup>99</sup> In addition, over half of all rural dwellers commute to the cities to work.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, a study devoted to the impact of modernization found that it failed to cancel out traditional peasant attitudes of pessimism, passivity, resignation to fate, and acceptance of the established order.<sup>101</sup>

The intelligentsia of Romania also took a path distinct from that in Hungary. Conformity was even more pronounced among the intelligentsia during communism. One explanation for this trend was that it resulted from the large percentage of first generation intelligentsia, that is, members of the class whose parents were workers or peasants. These newcomers to the class owed their social mobility to the system. Other factors included the relatively low number of pre-war communist intellectuals, and Ceausescu's penchant for blackmail and intimidation. Ceausescu's nationalist-style communism also served to derail what little intellectual opposition remained in Romania. The intelligentsia were allowed to vent their frustrations and suppressed nationalist sentiment by attacking Romania's traditional foreign enemies, Hungary and Russia. This virtually eliminated domestic criticism, and anti-foreigner nationalism remains a key topic among the post-communist thinkers and politicians.<sup>102</sup>

The Romanian Orthodox Church is the established faith in Romania. The 1923 Constitution declared that it was the state's "dominant" religion. Roughly 70 percent of Romanian citizens are affiliated with Orthodoxy.<sup>103</sup> Orthodoxy teaches obedience, submission to authority and resignation to the word of God. Thus passive and contemplative virtues are stressed. The split of the Church in the Middle Ages had a tremendous impact upon states which evolved from the Greek Orthodox faith. Western ideals failed to develop, including the separation of Church and state.<sup>104</sup> As a result, the Orthodox Church became a government tool for mobilizing the people in its behalf,

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<sup>98</sup>Shafir, *Romania...*, pp. 132 - 33.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>101</sup>Everett M. Rogers, *Modernization Among Peasants: The Impact of Communication*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 273.

<sup>102</sup>Shafir, *Romania...* pp. 144 - 50.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>104</sup>Lecture by Professor Bertrand Patenaude at the Naval Postgraduate School, 24 Aug. 1993.

rather than the church playing the role of opposition by advocating citizen's rights or equality under the rule of law.

The Romanian Communist Party (RCP), although ostensibly atheist, recognized the usefulness of Orthodoxy. Patriarch Marina, and his successor Justin Moisescu, collaborated with the RCP by silencing priests who spoke out against the regime. The communists repaid the Patriarchs by forcefully encouraging Romanian Uniates, made up primarily of Catholic minorities living in Transylvania, to convert to Orthodoxy. Encouragement included the transfer of Uniate property to Orthodoxy, as well as the arrests, persecution, and assassination of those who refused to convert.<sup>105</sup> Under these conditions it is not surprising that the spark which signaled the regime's demise came from a Calvinist priest and not subservient Orthodoxy.

The major difference between modern Romanian and Hungarian society is the presence or lack of minority ethnic groups. The end of Hungary's multi-cultural society created new minority groups within Romania. The huge population of citizens that are not ethnic Romanians continues to be the most prominent feature of domestic politics. One of the most significant multi-ethnic regions in Europe, the province of Transylvania has been home to 6 million Romanians as well as 2.5 million Magyars (Hungarians), 400,000 Germans, and an equal number of Jews, Gypsies, Ukrainians, Serbs, Greeks, Turks, Bulgars and others.<sup>106</sup> Comparing this to the nation's total population of 22.7 million, of which 89.4 percent are Romanian, 7.1 percent Hungarian, and 7 to 8 percent Gypsy (UN estimate), it is easy to understand why the issue permeates Romanian politics.<sup>107</sup>

Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu recently stated that the "Romanian state campaigns for the strict observance of the norms of international standards regarding the minorities and makes every effort to secure the rights of national minorities in Romania."<sup>108</sup> Contrary to his words, it seems that the state has no interest in changing past policies. Both rightist and leftist Romanian governments have followed policies akin to "ethnic purification" in the past. The various regimes expelled all types of

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<sup>105</sup>Shafir, Romania... p. 151 - 52.

<sup>106</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation Status..." p. 157.

<sup>107</sup>Michael Shafir and Dan Ionescu. "Romania: A Crucially Uneventful Year," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 1, 7 Jan. 1994, p. 123.

<sup>108</sup>"Melescanu on Romanians in Ukraine, Elsewhere." FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-014-A, 21 Jan. 1994, p. 9.

minorities at one time or another in an effort to create a singular ethnic society.<sup>109</sup> This explains why traditional inter-ethnic conflicts in Romania are not simply re-emerging after communism, but have never been absent. Today, the government has taken the form of a "Totalitarian Democracy," or the arbitrary rule of majorities who disregard the individual and collective rights of the minorities.<sup>110</sup> This "Totalitarian Democracy" is driven by the extremist groups that surfaced in 1991, which are known for their virulent stances. The influence of these groups on the government signals the continuance of ethnic woes in Romania.

As noted earlier, the Magyars constitute the largest ethnic minority in Romania. These people have lived a precarious existence within the country since the Vienna awards. Bucharest's claims that its Magyar citizens are treated according to European standards of minority rights are misleading. The Magyar's rights have steadily deteriorated over the last four decades and have improved little since 1989.<sup>111</sup> The RCP's persecution of the Magyars began in earnest as a reaction to the Hungarian uprising of 1956. This social upheaval spread to the ethnic Transylvanian communities, leading to immediate mass arrests, imprisonment, deportations and executions. The uprisings were also used by Ceausescu to discredit the Hungarian community over the next several decades.<sup>112</sup> 'Gulash Communism' also created problems for the Romanian communists. Their citizens could see that the lives of the neighboring Hungarians were substantially better. The Bucharest government responded by systematically persecuting the ethnic Hungarians in Romania, appeasing the ethnic Romanian citizenry.<sup>113</sup>

The following list taken from a United States government investigation illustrates the anti-Hungarian measures taken by the Romanian government, and is by no means all- inclusive.

1960 - Overall administrative reorganization of Romania provides the opportunity for gerrymandering the Hungarian autonomous region out of existence. Purely Hungarian areas are detached from it, while Romanian inhabited areas are attached to it to dilute its compact Hungarian nature. The name also reflects this erosion...Mures-Magyar Autonomous Region. In 1968 this region is eliminated, and three counties are created from its territory (Mures, Harghita, and Covasna).

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<sup>109</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." p. 30.

<sup>110</sup>Shafir, "Transylvanian Shadows..." p. 28.

<sup>111</sup>Dan Ionescu and Alfred A. Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough in Romanian - Hungarian Relations," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 2, No. 42, 22 Oct. 1993, p. 28.

<sup>112</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation..." p. 158.

<sup>113</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." p. 30.

1974 - Laws open the door to the legal confiscation of all "documents, recordings, official and private correspondence, diaries, manifestos, posters, sketches, drawings, engravings, imprints, seals and like material" over 30 years old from the possession of religious and cultural institutions and private citizens. This allowed the confiscation of historically significant items, eradicating the history of German, Hungarian and other nationalities in Transylvania.

1982 - Inflammatory, anti-Hungarian flyers written in Romanian appear in southeastern Transylvania. The texts, such as "Romanian Brothers! The Hungarians are traitors, they want to give Transylvania away. Stop them! Beat them! Tear them asunder!" openly incite Romanians against Hungarians.

1984 - A decree limiting the number of Hungarian-speaking students at the University of Cluj (Kolozsvár) to 5% (at an institution where Hungarians comprise 65%) of the student body. Another decree specifies that all geography and history teachers must be ethnic Romanians.

1985 - Rolls of toilet paper from Romania recycled from Hungarian-language Bibles are publicly displayed in Washington DC. Evidence is presented that the toilet paper had been manufactured from 20,000 Bibles donated by the Hungarian Reform Church in 1975, for distribution among the ethnic Hungarians. At the time Romania first received Most Favored Nation status from the US., the Romanian regime had pointed to the acceptance of the Bibles as proof of its magnanimity towards the Hungarian minority.<sup>114</sup>

The Magyar community has continued to register complaints about their treatment up to the present day. The Hungarians bemoan the fact that the new Bucharest government has yet to pass laws regulating the relations between Romanians and ethnic minorities. The Romanian "unitary state" declared in the constitution is another major point of consternation. This is regarded by the Magyars as having opened the door to ethnic discrimination. A draft law on primary and university education proposed by Iliescu's government will hinder the Magyars's request for the re-establishment of at least one state-financed university with courses taught in Hungarian, preferably the Bolyai University in Cluj.<sup>115</sup> The most pressing concerns of the ethnic Hungarians are guaranteed cultural autonomy, native language instruction at all levels, and the erection of bi-lingual signs in settlements where a significant share of the population is Magyar. All of these demands run counter to the central government's belief in individual vice collective rights of the minorities. Bucharest believes that loyalty to the nation-state should be every citizen's primary concern, with citizen's rights running a distant second.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation...", pp. 158 - 62.

<sup>115</sup>Michael Shafir, "Minorities Council Raises Questions," RFE/RL Research Report on Eastern Europe, Vol. 2, No. 24, 11 June 1993, p. 35.

<sup>116</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough...", pp. 28 - 29.

a.      **Germans**

Ethnic Germans in Romania can be divided into two main groups. The Lutheran Saxons came to Transylvania in the twelfth century from the Rhine and Mosel regions. Why they are called Saxon is now unknown. In the eighteenth century, Catholic Swabians from south-west Germany settled in Banat province. A sub-group, the Sathmar Swabians, live in the Satu Mare district of northern Transylvania. Austrian Landlers live in southern Transylvania as well. These groups made up an 800,000 strong German community on the eve of World War II.<sup>117</sup> This number has been in constant decline ever since. One hundred thousand people emigrated to Germany from Bessarabia as part of the secret pact. Another 100,000 fled before the advancing Red Army in 1944. The victorious Soviets deported 75,000 to labor camps after the war, of which only 30,000 returned. Those who remained didn't fare much better. All the property of ethnic Germans was expropriated in 1945-48, and the ethnic communities were forced onto collectives. Thirty thousand more were relocated from the Yugoslav border to the east Danubian plain in "de-kulakisation" drives really intended to remove any internal threat on the volatile border with Tito.

By 1967, the ethnic Germans began to rise above the other communities. Romania became the first East Bloc nation to normalize relations with West Germany. Ceausescu's need for foreign currency fostered a deal in 1978 whereby the Federal Republic of Germany paid 12,000DM per emigrant. The Romanians allowed 11,000 Germans to leave each year, enabling over 130,000 to escape.<sup>118</sup> Between 1975 and 1985, one third of the ethnic Germans living in Romania emigrated to the FRG. "Some villages in Transylvania literally became ghost towns."<sup>119</sup> Less than 250,000 ethnic Germans remained by 1989. The end of communism did little to halt the exodus. A survey in Bucharest taken one month after Ceausescu's fall showed that 71 percent of the German population were still determined to emigrate, while only 6 percent definitely intended to stay. The new government lifted all emigration restrictions, allowing the German communities to vote with their feet. According to Bonn, 111,150 people emigrated in 1990 alone. Today, there are only 20,000 ethnic Germans remaining.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>Dan Ionescu, "Countdown for the German Minority?" RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe, Vol. 2, No. 26, 28 June 1991, p. 32.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., pp. 32 - 33.

<sup>119</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation..." p. 229.

<sup>120</sup>Ionescu, "Countdown..." pp. 32 - 33.

The Romanian nationalist's desire for an ethnically pure Romanian state has backfired in the case of the Germans. The loss of the ethnically German people is now officially acknowledged to have damaged Romania's best interests.<sup>121</sup> The emigration has resulted in the loss of the country's most educated and disciplined minority, particularly in the industrial sector. The lack of ethnic Germans in Transylvania has political ramifications as well. The Saxons provided a balancing factor between the Romanian and Magyar ethnic groups, acting as a mediator at times. The lack of this balancing factor is regretted by most members of the majority government.

The ethnic Germans remaining in Romania have been affected the most. The ethnic German communities find it increasingly difficult to maintain their cultural identity. Social structures that have existed intact for over seven centuries are in danger of disappearing. One such institution, the "neighborhood" system, obliges community members to help one another build houses, harvest crops, and the like for the betterment of the entire community. The loss of these social nets in a time of severe economic turmoil is devastating. The Romanian Lutheran Church is basically defunct, lacking parishioners and clergy alike. The German language school system and media are in trouble as well. Finally, the entire Romanian nation is appalled at the loss of ancient Romanesque and Gothic architecture found in many German communities, owing to lack of maintenance. Many of these villages have been taken over by the nomadic Gypsies, who show little appreciation for their value. *Tineretul Liber*, a Bucharest daily, summed up the Romanian attitude when it wrote, "The Germans are leaving, and we are left to coexist with the 'marvelous' swarthy kin."<sup>122</sup> The Germans no longer constitute an ethnic bloc to speak of, but their legacy will remain for some time.

#### **b. Gypsies**

The exact number of Gypsies (they prefer to be called Romas or Romanies) in Romania is unknown. Official statistics are skewed by the prejudices of census takers as well as the reluctance of many Romanies to openly declare themselves as such. Romanian leaders claim 2.3 million people, which is probably inflated. Romanies traditionally consider themselves as nomadic, although the fact is they have been settled for several generations. Only 3 to 10% are still truly nomadic. There are

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<sup>121</sup>Shafir, "Minorities Council..." p. 36.

<sup>122</sup>Ionescu, "Countdown..." pp. 34 - 35.

three major bands, each bearing rather exotic names. The 'nomads and kettle smiths' located around Sibiu, the 'settled Gypsies and fiddlers' in Tirgu-Mures, and the 'Hungarian-speaking and the silk' in Cluj. Note that all three locations are Transylvanian cities with large, multi-ethnic populations. Every ten years, the Great Lord of the Romanies is elected to lead the 40 distinct groups. With his headquarters in Sibiu, Iulian (the current lord) is involved in inter-tribal disputes as well as acting as Romania's representative in international Romanie organizations. However, Romanie kings (as they refer to their leaders) have had little effect upon past governments. The Romanies have a long history of hardship that officially ended in the nineteenth century with the legal recognition of Gypsy equality, although the twentieth century has seen little improvement in their standard of living. The Romanies were victims of pogroms and the Holocaust. Slum housing, chronic unemployment, illiteracy and crime have been their lot.<sup>123</sup>

The Romanies gained new political rights after the December 1989 revolution. In the past, they had been denied recognition by the government as an ethnic group. Today, they are creating political institutions to counter racial prejudice and to fight for their rights. Unfortunately, inter-ethnic harmony has not occurred. In fact, if there is one thing the ethnic Romanians and Magyars can agree upon, it is hatred of the Romanies. This sentiment reflects the perception of Romanies as a "social sore, inclined at birth to larceny, fraud, robbery, violent crime, and the like."<sup>124</sup> The xenophobic hatred is rampantly displayed in the press. "The Romanian media often depict Gypsies stereotypically as thieves, beggars and black marketers, or as people who do nothing but cast spells, make curses and foretell the future."<sup>125</sup> The Romanies also make convenient scapegoats for all kinds of trouble. For instance, Ceausescu and his wife Elena are now considered to have been of Tatar Gypsey and Gypsey heritage respectively. Violence is associated the Romanies in part because of these attitudes.

On 9 October 1990, 32 Romanie houses were burned down or destroyed in a Transylvanian village. This marked the beginning of post-Ceausescu violence towards the Romanies. In 1991, at least 24 different villages attacked their local Romanies, in most cases burning down houses and forcing the clan to leave. The

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<sup>123</sup>Dan Ionescu, "The Gypsies Organize." RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 1, No. 26, 29 June 1990, p. 39.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 41.



bloodshed in Bolantin Deal provides a typical scenario of Romanian persecution. On Orthodox Easter night a member of the 'bear trainers' clan stabbed to death the 22 year old son of a local farming engineer. The next morning 6,000 townsfolk assembled to seek retribution against the 'bear trainers,' and not just the responsible individual. By this time the Romanians had fled to the woods, so only their property was harmed. A few days later, 34 clan members tried to return, managing to survive only after government authorities stopped a 2,000 strong lynch mob from carrying out their plan. The townspeople later said that they hadn't wanted to kill the Romanians, just drive them away from their homes.<sup>126</sup> The Romanians are not taking things sitting down. The latest narrowly averted clash was initiated by Iulian. The 'King' threatened to march with 30,000 followers on the offices of money-multiplying societies that have recently hit Romania. These pyramid games, similar to chain letters, have taken the money of many Gypsies and failed to pay off.<sup>127</sup> If the Romanians begin to fight back, the violence will escalate. Psychologically speaking, the other ethnic groups can not afford to grant the Romanians equality. This would be tantamount to admitting that they now occupy the lowest rung of society, which is unacceptable to the various proud cultures.

### c. Jews

Romania has never been fond of its Jews. In 1923 it was the last European nation to grant Jews citizenship, and then did so only under duress. Romania had the third largest pre-war Jewish population in Europe, numbering almost 800,000.<sup>128</sup> Today only 17,000 remain. Three hundred thousand perished in the Transdniester lagers of the Holocaust and thousands more emigrated to Israel after the war. Ceausescu maintained payment arrangements with Israel at the same time, and for the same reasons as with West Germany. Israel paid handsomely for emigrants, and the United States upped the ante by granting Most Favored Nation status to Romania in return for its allowing the Jews to leave.<sup>129</sup> The Jews were the only group under communism allowed to directly use foreign funds received in hard currency. As a

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<sup>126</sup>Ionescu, "Violence Against Gypsies..." pp. 23 - 24.

<sup>127</sup>Virgil Lazar, "The Gypsies Threaten Reprisals." Romania Libera. 12 Jan. 1994, p. 16, as translated and reported in "Paper Views Caritas Issue, Gypsy Threats." FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-015, 24 Jan. 1994.

<sup>128</sup>Siegfried Jagendorf, Jagendorf's Foundry: Memoir of the Romanian Holocaust, 1941 - 44. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), pp. xviii, xx.

<sup>129</sup>Shafir, "Anti-Semitism..." p. 21.

result, active community institutions have been maintained through private U.S. and Israeli contributions.<sup>130</sup> However, a small Jewish population has not meant the end of Romanian anti-Semitism.

The Romanian Prosecutor General recently ruled that neither the publication of Mein Kampf nor the activity of several extreme right parties was unlawful. This ruling would be fair in a society that recognizes free speech for all of its citizens, but Romania does not qualify as such. Immediately after the ruling, anti-Semitic activity rapidly increased.<sup>131</sup> The disdain for Jews was imbedded in the East European culture long before communism arrived. However, today's behavior is justified as revenge for years of totalitarian rule. To the extremists, Judaism equals communism, and the 6 million victims of the Holocaust "pale in comparison to the 20 million Romanian psychic victims of communism."<sup>132</sup>

The myth of the Jews having orchestrated communism persists in Romania, but the facts contradict it. Gheorghe Dej purged most prominent Jewish RCP members at the same time many Magyars were removed. Pre-war elections show that the bulk of the Jewish community voted for the democratic bourgeoisie parties, and never held a majority or even a plurality in the post-war governments.<sup>133</sup> Yet, the public imagination is "obsessed by the Jewish presence in the government, in parliament, in the press, television and God knows where else."<sup>134</sup> This situation persists despite the virtually total lack of Jewish citizens. The escalation of anti-Semitism is most likely the result of economic hardship, and the resulting search for outside groups to blame in order to make the difficulties more palatable.

### 3. Romanian Strategic Culture

There are seven central elements of Romanian strategic culture. Each component has become so embedded within national traditions over time that it may constitute an impediment toward improved relations with other states. The following list includes a brief discussion of each point.

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<sup>130</sup>"Romania: Most Favored Nation Status," p. 229.

<sup>131</sup>Shafir and Ionescu, "Romania..." p. 126.

<sup>132</sup>Shafir, "Anti-Semitism..." p. 24.

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.* p. 21.

<sup>134</sup>*Ibid.* p. 29.

**a. Intolerant nationalism based upon an inferiority complex.**

Throughout the Middle Ages being Romanian meant being a peasant or serf. Only the influx of Romanies in the sixteenth century prevented Romanians from occupying the lowest rung of the East European social ladder. The nationalism that began in Transylvania was based upon the goal of escaping this stigma and gaining real political rights. When the treaty of Trianon doubled the physical size of Romania overnight and bestowed upon it millions of people from an alien culture, it was more than many in Transylvania could tolerate. The former oppressors were now citizens in a country governed by what they deemed to be *inferior* Romanians. What's more, these new citizens demanded the very freedoms that they had previously denied the Romanians!

The ethnic Romanians responded to the conceited attitudes of their new citizens by exacting revenge, and using the minorities as scapegoats for domestic problems. It soon became easier for the government to attack and ridicule the Magyars and other ill-perceived minorities (most notably the Romanies and Jews) by labeling them ethnically and culturally beneath the "true Romanians" as a means of acquiring public support, rather than attempting to overcome traditional stereotypes by incorporating the new citizens equally into Romanian society. Discrimination became an integral part of the Romanian national culture during the decades following the Trianon treaty. Thus, ethnic Romanians abused their newfound political power by creating a nationalist ideology based more upon a hatred of other cultures than emphasizing the positive attributes of their own. This ideology has been handed down through the generations, reinforced by governments representing all sides of the political spectrum. Given this attitude, it is nearly impossible for Romania's current government to change the typical ethnic Romanian citizen's opinion of Romania's minorities in the near future, even if it were inclined to do so.

**b. Multi-ethnic state characterized by strong ethnic allegiances.**

For ethnic Romanians, cultural allegiance is a result of the national myth (Daco-Roman origins and pride in rising above repression) and the Treaty of Trianon. To the ethnic Romanians, loyalty to their culture is synonymous with loyalty to the state. Since Trianon, ethnic loyalty has intensified because of fear of minority power. The ethnic minorities advocate individual and collective rights to guarantee their cultural autonomy regardless of size. However, the ethnic Romanians view cultural

autonomy in the Magyar case as being the first step toward reunification with Hungary. Therefore, they promote the idea of loyalty to the state over individual rights.

**c. Traditions of public conformity, passivity and deference to authority.**

The centuries of authoritarian rule under the Turks, the lack of westernizing influences such as the Enlightenment and reform, the lack of a middle class to champion individualism, the failure of the intelligentsia to act as a political opposition, the teachings of the Orthodox faith, and paranoia regarding supposed foreign designs all combined to create or perpetuate traditional peasant attitudes toward government. The communist legacy was therefore not merely one of instituting authoritarian control, but rather served to perpetuate a tradition, albeit in a stricter sense. The fear among democrats in post-revolutionary Romania is that democratic systems are predicated upon the existence of individual political thought, which conformity does not engender. These cultural traits endanger the existence of democracy within Romania, and underscore the potential for popular acceptance of another authoritarian regime. Such regimes in the past have portrayed Hungary and the Magyars as villains in order to unify the ethnic Romanians against a common threat. This pattern might be repeated under another authoritarian regime. Thus, the loss of democracy in Romania would probably worsen relations between the two states.

**d. Winner-take-all attitude toward domestic politics.**

Perhaps out of deference to the state, or due to the lack of experience with democracy, public opinion does not play a major role in influencing government policy. The government also lacks institutionalized checks and balances. As a result, the ruling elite has total freedom of action once in power. This helps to explain Romania's history of quick and dramatic shifts in government from one extreme to the next, and the corruptness of these governments once seated. Since the appearance of "democracy" in 1989, there has been little evidence that this pattern has changed. The cultural traits of passivity, conformity, and deference to authority continue to obstruct the development of positive Hungarian-Romanian relations, even when Romania is taking some limited steps toward a democratic system of government. All of these traits inhibit support for opposition parties in general, and for those parties advocating minority rights reform in particular.

**e. Traditionally an agricultural nation in which modern industry came relatively late.**

The various parts of Romania were traditionally used by the Ottomans and Habsburgs as a source of food for the more 'important' parts of the empires. The state continued to rely upon agricultural production as a source of wealth until World War II. Today Romania is dotted by factories within urban centers, but their employees maintain traditional agricultural roots. A typical worker lives in a rural village and commutes to work in order to earn hard currency for consumer goods, while his extended family engages in traditional chores necessary for basic life staples. Thus, traditional links to the village exist in Romania as well as in Hungary, despite improved communications within the country. However, the interactions among government institutions in Romania are more ill-defined than in Hungary, allowing greater freedom of action for local authorities. The village living standards are still low. These standards failed to improve during industrialization as a result of the hardships incurred in this rapid process. People who live outside the village community (including the central government) are still viewed warily, and foreign cultures are held in outright contempt. When all of these factors are combined, the power of "trusted" local authorities is greatly enhanced, to the point where mayors and prefects have openly defied Bucharest. This environment effectively blocks attempts at national reform.

**f. Fear of external states and great power relations.**

The various territories constituting modern Romania were considered prizes in international disputes for centuries. Foreign rule was normal and not the exception. Furthermore, Romanian sovereignty failed to guarantee the integrity of the state after its independence. Its geographic location has made it virtually impossible to maintain neutrality in major power disputes. The Russo-Turkish wars, various Balkan conflicts, the two World Wars, and the Cold War forced the state into armed conflict or confrontation, which usually resulted in occupation. Thus Romanians are extremely sensitive to perceived aggression and irredentism. Hungary's involvement in Romania's minority problems is seen as an intrusion in a sovereign issue. To many Romanians, Budapest appears to be following an aggressive diplomatic policy. This is considered evidence that Hungary still maintains irredentist designs upon Transylvania.

**g. Questioning of the inviolability of borders.**

Romania failed to create a state or even a feeling of common nationality until the nineteenth century. Since the first days of the Unified Principalities, the territorial makeup of Romania has been questioned. Parcels of land and pockets of people have been shifted in and out of the country for all but the last thirty-nine years. Post-communist Romania appears to be receptive to the prospect of continuing this tradition. Romanians believed the reunion of Moldova, partially made up of Bessarabia and Moldavia (historic "Romanian" lands) was imminent with that state's secession from the Soviet Union. Romanian fear of neighboring irredentist designs is not surprising. Bucharest appears to have no qualms about re-drawing international borders in its favor, and suspects its neighbors of harboring comparable ambitions. The Hungarian situation is no exception. The Romanian government undoubtedly understands that Hungary might make persuasive claims to Transylvania on both historical and ethnic grounds. The loss of Transylvania is therefore considered a very distinct possibility to be guarded against at all times. This makes Romanian - Hungarian relations extremely sensitive and difficult to improve.



### III. CONTEMPORARY DOMESTIC POLITICS

#### A. HUNGARY

In the spring of 1994 Hungary underwent its first democratic transition of government since the HSWP's departure. Two rounds of national elections took place with no major problems or incidents, and in both elections over 60% of eligible voters cast a ballot.<sup>135</sup> The new National Assembly was convened on 28 June 1994 by President Arpad Goncz, whose own five-year term expires in 1995. This parliament's makeup reflects a continuity with the past since all six parties represented made up the previous government, although in a different configuration. Furthermore, unlike other post-communist nations, an "overwhelming majority of Hungarians reject extremist views and favor parliamentary democracy."<sup>136</sup> Hungarian law stipulates that 5 percent of the vote is needed to get in parliament. Neither the extreme leftist Workers Party nor Istvan Csurka's semi-fascist Life Party came close to this cutoff.<sup>137</sup> The elected political elites agree that radical ideas pose a danger to democratic ideals, although they disagree on which side of the political spectrum harbors the greater threat.<sup>138</sup> All of these factors are positive indications that democratic values and practices are taking hold in Hungary, but the election returns possibly indicate otherwise.

The 326 seat Hungarian parliament is elected in part by constituency seats, with the rest coming from party lists (125). For the individual seats, 50 percent or more is needed by a candidate to win a seat outright in the first round. Otherwise, all candidates receiving 15 percent or more participate in a follow on election. Elections are held every four years. The 1990 government was formed by the conservative Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF), which won 42% of the seats in response to the fall of communism.<sup>139</sup> In 1994 the HDF came in third by only attaining 38 seats, and was soundly defeated by the Hungarian Socialist Party's (HSP) 209 members. In addition, the Alliance of Free Democrats (AFD) garnered 70 more seats and became

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<sup>135</sup>Judith Pataki, "Hungary's New Parliament Inaugurated," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 29, 22 July 1994, p. 7.

<sup>136</sup>Edith Oltay, "Hungary," RFE/RL Special Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 16, 22 April 1994, p. 58.

<sup>137</sup>Edith Oltay, "Former Communists Win First Round of Hungarian Elections," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 21, 27 May 1994, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup>Oltay, "Hungary," p. 59.

<sup>139</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 1.



the HSP's junior coalition partners. The Socialists now have an absolute parliamentary majority, and their coalition has the absolute two-thirds majority which is needed by law to pass important legislation.<sup>140</sup> Thus, the 1994 election effectively put the pre-revolutionary leaders back in power.

### 1. Hungarian Political Parties

The Hungarian Socialist Party was formed in 1989 by Janos Kadar and other former communists, including its current head Gyula Horn. The party is the direct descendant of the Socialist Workers Party which ruled under communism, although a fringe party still maintains the HSWP name. The HSP presents itself as a rejuvenated party of professional politicians concerned with pragmatic tasks rather than past ideologies. It ran and won on the slogans "Let the Experts govern" and bring back those who "know how to make government work."<sup>141</sup> The extent to which the HSP changed from 1989 to 1994 appears limited. Old communist party functionaries continue to hold posts throughout the organization, and the party has yet to "define a clear stance on the legacy of Karl Marx" and the communist ideology in general.<sup>142</sup>

The HSP is internally divided into four factions over the role communism and other past ideas should play in the modern party. Horn leads the strongest group, which is made up of ex-apparatchik officials who identify themselves as 'technocrats.' Matyas Szuros, the HSWP Foreign Affairs Secretary before Horn, continues to be Horn's chief political rival within the party. Szuros leads the 'national left wing platform' whose fundamental interest rests upon the fate of Magyar minorities abroad and the historical position of the nation. Szuros bitterly criticized HSP attacks upon the previous government, reportedly without offering solutions to the issues; and it is his faction which periodically threatens to leave the party. A third wing calling itself the 'liberal social democratic platform' is led by the Chairman of the HSP's National Board, Ivan Vitanyi. Vitanyi's group represents the more moderate elements of the HSP and advocates closer cooperation with other liberal parties, especially the AFD. Finally, a historian named Tamas Krausz is recognized as the spokesman for the members politically positioned to the left of Horn. Little is known about Krausz's supporters as

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<sup>140</sup>Pataki, "Hungary's New Parliament...", p. 7.

<sup>141</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists...", p. 3.

<sup>142</sup>Edith Oltay, "Hungarian Socialists Prepare for Comeback." RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 9, 4 March 1994, p. 23.

they espouse no particular political agenda.<sup>143</sup> It is unknown how unified the party is in light of these factions. Of the 209 HSP deputies elected, 149 came from individual lists and will probably be more concerned with their constituent interests than party discipline.<sup>144</sup>

The Free Democrats (AFD) under Gabor Kuncze became the HSP's coalition partners after the elections, in part because they were the only party willing to join the socialists. Kuncze's party advocates an agenda based upon three goals: European integration, regional cooperation, and a policy supporting Magyars abroad. The AFD favors an early start to EU negotiations and seeks consultative rights in Europe's main political and security institutions (that is, NATO and the EU) prior to full membership. This party wants Hungary to obtain full NATO membership after serving a few years in the PFP program, and regards a nation wide referendum on joining the EU as unnecessary, although the AFD will not oppose such a vote if a large majority of the population demands one. The AFD has criticized the previous government for its narrow-minded focus on regional ethnic rights, claiming that such a program unnecessarily strains international relations and has tarnished Hungary's image abroad. Kuncze and his followers emphasize a program fostering reconciliation with Hungary's neighbors. It involves economic accords and cultural relations and is intended to build a foundation of trust and cooperation. The AFD views bilateral treaties as a means to reach mutual understanding and not as an end in themselves, and they have stated their belief that Hungary has no territorial claims whatsoever. Therefore, the Free Democrats do not oppose treaty clauses concerning the inviolability of existing state borders. However, the AFD does insist upon affirming minority language rights in education, as well as cultural and religious freedom and political representation in any such treaties.<sup>145</sup> In summary, the AFD's agenda centers on friendship with Hungary's neighbors, but the party continues to attach the same conditions on improving relations as its predecessors, without adding anything new of substance.

The Democratic Forum (HDF) took office in 1990 under Prime Minister Jozsef Antall. Antall's leadership was politically controversial because of his commitment to the Magyars abroad. At one point he even went so far as to declare himself the "Prime

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<sup>143</sup>Ibid., pp. 22 - 23.

<sup>144</sup>Pataki, "Hungary's New Parliament..." p. 7.

<sup>145</sup>Alfred A. Reisch, "Hungarian Parties' Foreign-Policy Electoral Platform," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 19, 13 May 1994, p. 17.

Minister in spirit of 15 million Hungarians,"<sup>146</sup> even though the nation has only 11 million citizens. Peter Bouross, who succeeded Antall after his death in December 1993, has continued the policies of his predecessor. When the Socialist party began to reassert itself in politics, Bouross stressed the need to hold former communists accountable for pre-1990 events and attempted to emphasize Christian values and Hungary's historical importance. The HDF failed to understand the attitudes of the people, whose concerns focused on the needs of daily life under harsh economic conditions and not on philosophical arguments about past injustices.<sup>147</sup> The incessant quarreling within the HDF added to the socialists' image as a relatively professional organization.<sup>148</sup> The conservatives' political clout is all but gone, with only 38 Assembly seats.

## 2. HSP-AFD Governance

Gyula Horn is now the Prime Minister of Hungary. Horn's communist party affiliations include a university education in the Soviet Union and decades spent in the party apparatus. In 1956 he was a member of the citizen militia which helped the communist troops mop up anti-Communist resistance. Horn's political detractors argue that he became interested in reform in the early 1980's only as a means of saving the party from destruction, not because of ideological convictions. However, Horn is credited with heavily influencing then Prime Minister Nemeth to allow the East German emigration from Hungary in 1989, while acting as the last communist Foreign Minister in Hungary. This act and his personal magnetism make him a very popular politician.<sup>149</sup> Horn's political popularity is not the only reason for the socialist return to power. The public's growing dissatisfaction with rising unemployment and the simultaneous decrease in production and living standards hurt the HDF, while nostalgic memories of full employment and the social welfare net provided by the state under communism bolstered widespread support for the HSP.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>Michael Shafir, "Ethnic Tension Runs High in Romania," RFE RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 32, 19 Aug. 1994, p. 24.

<sup>147</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 3.

<sup>148</sup>Oltay, "Hungarian Socialists..." p. 21.

<sup>149</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 4.

<sup>150</sup>Oltay, "Hungarian Socialists..." p. 21.

During the campaign the HSP declared that they had no intention of returning to a centrally planned economy or single party state. They vowed to respect the existing property relations, including the restoration of former Church properties begun by the conservatives, and pledged to continue the privatization process under parliament's guidance.<sup>151</sup> The HSP also said they would continue government compensation for victims of political repression and property expropriation by the communists. However, Horn has criticized the plan, which entails handing out coupons to the victims (with which they can purchase shares in state-owned industry, among other things), as being a boost to the black market.<sup>152</sup>

The HSP's foreign affairs platform is similar to that of their Free Democrat partners. The socialists advocate a regional approach and seek to utilize the current international climate to their advantage, stressing to neighboring countries that all of their futures are closely interwoven, and emphasizing the need to avoid overestimating Hungary's importance in the region. The essence of their agenda on attaining security is to avoid making enemies by embracing all states on friendly terms. This is to be achieved by downplaying the sensitive topic of Magyar minority rights in neighboring states while promoting reconciliation through state treaties confirming the inviolability of borders and Hungary's commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Like the AFD, the socialists do not outright reject Budapest's role as the Magyar protector, but rather they seek protection for minority rights in conformity with European norms.

The HSP wants Hungary to obtain full membership in NATO and the EU, supports the PFP initiative, and believes in the need for a national referendum on the relinquishing of a measure of state sovereignty to the EU. The HSP has said in the past that it wants NATO membership only if all other states in the region (Russia included) are offered the same deal. This coincides with the socialist regional outlook on the international system, since solo Hungarian, or even the inclusion of all four Visegrad states in NATO and the EU would separate East-Central Europe into two groups of nations (full versus associate members of the EU and NATO). The HSP argues that a divided region would lead to distrust and potential new conflicts, lowering local stability and threatening Hungary's security, even though integration into NATO and the EU would foster a feeling of security and improve economic conditions within the

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<sup>151</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 3.

<sup>152</sup>Oltay, "The Former Communist's Election Victory in Hungary," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, No. 25, 24 June 1994, p. 5.

integrated states, effectively extending the West European area of stability into East-Central Europe. The new government's international strategy therefore follows three stages. The fostering of friendly relations is intended to improve the regional economy and to promote stability in political institutions. The socialists envision that this in turn may allow Hungary and its neighbors to become full members within the EU, WEU and NATO, ultimately improving the fate of the Magyars abroad.<sup>153</sup>

A pre-election survey by the Szonda Ipsos polling group asked 1,009 Budapest residents about their views on a non-coalition government. 53% percent remarked that an HSP-only government would be bad for the country, and nationwide surveys routinely find that over 80% prefer coalition governments to those of one party.<sup>154</sup> It is therefore not surprising that the HSP sought to include the AFD in governing the country despite having a clear majority. This coalition helps the socialists legitimize themselves at home and - more importantly - abroad, by avoiding the return of a single-party state. Furthermore, the coalition has the added benefit of allowing the AFD party to share the burden of responsibility for harsh economic measures to come. The HSP is keenly aware of what toppled the conservatives at the polls and so they seek to avoid the same fate. Meanwhile, the Free Democrats view the coalition as the only way to maintain an opposition voice in government, given the HSP's landslide victory. Major legislation requires a two-thirds vote, giving the AFD limited leverage within the coalition. However, Gabor Kuncze stated before the elections that if the HSP gained an absolute majority, the AFD would not be strong enough to represent the interest of its constituents.<sup>155</sup> During the passage of a law concerning the appointment of new state media heads, one of the first political battles within the new parliament, the opposition and the AFD both failed to influence the HSP's decisions. This sparked renewed fears that the socialists will disregard the legitimate concerns of the opposition entirely, which is tantamount to a return of single-party rule.<sup>156</sup>

The opposition has other concerns about the HSP-dominated government. The close links between the socialists (primarily Horn's wing) and the National Association of Hungarian Trade Unions (MSZOSZ) is alarming. The MSZOSZ's origins in the

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<sup>153</sup>Alfred A. Reisch, "Hungarian Parties' Foreign-Policy Electoral Platforms," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 19, 13 May 1994, pp. 17 - 19.

<sup>154</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 5.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid., pp. 3 - 5.

<sup>156</sup>Judith Pataki, "Controversy Over Hungary's New Media Heads," RFE RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 31, 12 Aug. 1994, p. 17.

communist National Council of Trade Unions have not gone unnoticed. That body was deeply involved in the implementation of HSWP decisions throughout the communist era. The MSZOSZ's affiliation with government nurtures fears that the unions will support policies slowing down economic reforms, promoting greater job security, and demanding higher government social spending. This spending would be funded through increased taxes on the business class, taxes which could in turn stifle economic growth. The power of the trade unions is so potentially overwhelming that it could even tip the balance within the socialist party toward the left, weakening the political influence of those members still inclined to support reform. Finally, the restoration of the old party apparatus in conjunction with union support may signal the return of the old client-patron system removed in 1990. This system of institutionalized nepotism allowed party members to thoroughly entrench themselves in power. A return to this system would hamper capitalism and go against basic democratic and capitalist principles.<sup>157</sup>

Horn and the HSP are busy consolidating their power in the legislature. The HSP replaced the old parliamentary procedures (left over from the unitary party state) with procedures more favorable to themselves, and have adopted rules strictly enforcing party discipline. The opposition sees this as a clear move to curtail their rights, and a way to hinder defections by individual HSP seat holders from the party line. The power of the ruling coalition is such that it can easily amend laws and the constitution itself. The HSP has the power, although not the political motive (in current and foreseeable circumstances), to legally reinstate the single-party state.<sup>158</sup>

### 3. Assessment

Prime Minister Horn is apparently content to limit his leadership to the Magyars living within Hungary's borders. This is a positive sign: it suggests that Romanian-Hungarian relations may yet improve. Horn met briefly with his Romanian counterpart in Trieste on 17 July 1994 and tried to convey his new approach to the issues. However, clashes in Transylvania between the authorities and Magyars just prior to the visit effectively undermined any chance for a fresh start.<sup>159</sup> Horn, like his predecessor, is too politically weak to go against popular sentiment regarding the importance of minority issues - despite his party's electoral clout.

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<sup>157</sup>Oltay, "Former Communists..." p. 5.

<sup>158</sup>Pataki, "Hungary's New Parliament..." pp. 7, 10 - 11.

<sup>159</sup>Shafir, "Ethnic Tension..." p. 24.

The HSP's hold on political power is tentative. Public support for the government could evaporate if the economic hardship endured by the people since reforms began became a wasted effort. This could happen if the Socialists backed away from strict reform measures, thereby losing whatever ground was gained under privatization. Social tensions and labor disputes over the means of reform could further split the party, destabilizing the government and removing the legislative leverage Horn currently enjoys.<sup>160</sup> Even Horn's political base, the MSZOSZ, could withdraw its support from the government if it felt that issues important to it were not being addressed. The return to political power of former communists who constituted the privileged class under communism could also hinder real attempts at socialist reform in foreign and domestic politics. The communist politicians proved to be more interested in the preservation of personal power than in tackling the nation's problems in the past; and this may turn out to be the case for many of the former communists who now call themselves socialists.

The new government will probably continue economic reform, but at a much slower pace. Some allegiance must be shown to the MSZOSZ causes for political reasons. However, most of the former communist leaders are now the primary beneficiaries of privatization. These men had the capital to invest, and the personal connections as a result of their political positions to become the heads of factories and private enterprises. Therefore they have the most to lose in canceling reforms half way through. The real fear about HSP power is that it may signal the return of the client-patron relations of the past, especially in light of the new entrepreneurial interests of the former party apparatchiks.<sup>161</sup>

It is also unlikely that a major shift in international relations will occur as a result of Horn's leadership. Western nations are skeptical about the return of the former communists to power. This could negatively influence foreign investment and hinder Hungary's integration with Western institutions. The HSP's regional outlook is farsighted but unrealistic in the current security climate. General disagreements between Hungary and its neighbors continue on a variety of issues. Both states involved in a dispute must want a settlement before an accord can be reached. Horn's ability to change the current situation is weakened by his party's internal dissension and the lack of a clear mandate for a new foreign policy. The Socialist return to power was

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<sup>160</sup>Oltay, "The Former Communists..." p. 6.

<sup>161</sup>Oltay, "The Former Communist Election..." p. 6.

prompted by a domestic backlash, and not general disgruntlement with the HFD's foreign agenda. Finally, many issues are complicated by the domestic pressures on foreign leaders. For example, a change in the general attitude of Romanians towards minorities must occur before laws enacted by Bucharest are enforced or even promulgated. "Hungarian foreign policy is unlikely to undergo any radical change until all of the parties involved, governments and minorities, are prepared to make mutually acceptable and beneficial compromises."<sup>162</sup>

## B. ROMANIA

The Romanian political scene is fraught with many problems. The lack of clearly defined separations of power and authority between the central administration and local government, and between the legislative, judicial and executive branches within the central government has created widespread political confusion.<sup>163</sup> The lack of firm government control at the local level has facilitated vigilante-type justice.

The growing unpopularity of the central government suggests that the legal system may not be able to control civil disobedience. For example, President Ion Iliescu was booed, protested and jeered by a crowd during a recent visit to the "martyr city" of Timisoara. The highly organized affair (reminiscent of Ceausescu) in which Iliescu visited the barracks where 13 young persons were murdered during the 1989 revolution, followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cemetery of Martyred Heroes, was designed to foster public support and sympathy for the government.<sup>164</sup> A recent poll even suggests that 68% of the people want a change in government as a way of settling the current political crises.<sup>165</sup>

Elected officials are also unhappy with the current state of affairs. In June 1994 the opposition parties moved to defeat Iliescu and his government through a motion of no confidence and corresponding initiatives to impeach the President. The parliamentary move failed by a vote of 227 to 208 on 30 June. Six days later

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<sup>162</sup>Alfred A. Reisch, "Consensus on Hungary's Foreign Policy Frayed By Elections," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 20, 20 May 1994, p. 48.

<sup>163</sup>Andrei Marga, rector of Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, as reported in "Roundtable:...", pp. 28 -29.

<sup>164</sup>Romania Libera, 28 Jan. 1994, p. 3, as translated and reported in "Timisoara Citizens Protest Iliescu's Visit," FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-021, 1 Feb. 1994, p. 30.

<sup>165</sup>Dan Ionescu and Michael Shafir, "Romanian Government Reorganized," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 13, 1 April 1994.



impeachment proceedings were overturned for lack of grounds by the Romanian Supreme Court.<sup>166</sup> Iliescu's political unpopularity, coupled with his unwillingness to yield power, has forced the President ever closer to the extreme end of the political spectrum. "Iliescu obviously does not wish to change the current political situation....Regardless of how deep the crisis, he is not prepared to give up on them [the extremists], as he is not prepared to give up the reins of power either, although he knows that a reshuffle of the political spectrum would be beneficial for the country."<sup>167</sup>

### **1. Romanian Political Parties**

Romanian politics is a "fur ball" of fragmented parties and factions that constantly change names as they form and leave coalitions. Romania is currently governed by a coalition group called the Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PDSR). The PDSR was known as the Democratic National Salvation Front until July 1993. Another, more radical organization named the Romanian National Unity Party (PRNU) backs the government and participates in ruling the state. The PDSR is dependent upon the PRNU in the legislature. President Iliescu is considered a pragmatic politician who is primarily concerned with keeping the moderates and hard-liners within the government happy. As a result, Iliescu shies away from single-party politics. This is left to Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu, leader and mouthpiece of the PDSR.<sup>168</sup>

Gheorghe Funar heads the extreme nationalist PRNU, which is itself a coalition formed in December 1993 with the Democratic Agrarian Party. Funar's political views center around his unbending stance on the preeminency of loyalty to the state. During one heated exchange in Cluj, Funar told Magyar political representatives who were unhappy over ethnically motivated ordinances to "get it into your heads that you are here in Romania...If you do not like it, gentlemen, Hungary is close enough, and the right to emigrate is guaranteed by the constitution."<sup>169</sup> The Agrarian party, among

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<sup>166</sup>Michael Shafir, "Romanian Politics in Turmoil." RFE RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 29, 22 July 1994, p. 5.

<sup>167</sup>Romania Libera, 17 Jan.1994, p. 1, as reported and translated in "Iliescu Criticized for Hindering Reform," FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-017, 26 Jan. 1994, p. 34.

<sup>168</sup>Shafir and Ionescu, "Romania..." pp. 122 - 23.

<sup>169</sup>Shafir, "Ethnic Tension..." p. 29.

other things, is against economic reforms forced on Romania by "foreign agents in the IMF."<sup>170</sup>

The Democratic Convention (CDR) is the mainstream opposition coalition. The leftist National Communists support the CDR, but the National Liberal Party (NLP) and its offshoots form the bulk of the opposition. The NLP was revived after Ceausescu's defeat by returning émigrés and old liberal veterans who had been banned from political activity under communism. Its leader, Radu Campeanu, was himself exiled to Paris after suffering years of hardship in labor camps. The NLP advocates restoration of individual rights, freedom of religion, equal rights of minorities, rapid privatization of agriculture, and the gradual privatization of industry. Campeanu lost the 1990 presidential election to Iliescu, and the party failed to qualify in the 1992 parliamentary elections due to internal struggles over leadership and generational conflicts. The NLP has officially withdrawn from the CDR, but remnant splinter groups of the party remain. "In view of the Romanian liberal movement's current fragmentation, the task of unifying it appears a formidable one."<sup>171</sup> However, there is hope in the growing number of young intellectuals interested in the movement.<sup>172</sup>

Since the NLP's breakup, perhaps the strongest party within the opposition camp (CDR) is the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania (HDFR). This minority party is actually another coalition of different interest groups. However, unlike other groups, the HDFR maintains considerable party discipline because of the threat of Romanian extremists, and the bond of a common Magyar cause rather than allegiance to any particular leader. Cohesiveness has its drawbacks, since the HDFR is perceived as threatening by many Romanians who fear minority power.<sup>173</sup> However, the HDFR is not immune to internal strife. The internal struggle that plagues the HDFR centers around two factions. The moderate group backs the party President, Bela Marko, while the radical hero, Bishop Laszlo Tokes, speaks for the rest.<sup>174</sup> It was Tokes' lambasting of Ceausescu's treatment of the ethnic minorities that served as the catalyst for the events leading to the 1989 Romanian revolution.<sup>175</sup> The moderates

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<sup>170</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>171</sup>Dan Ionescu, "Romania's Liberals," *RFE RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 22, 28 May 1993, pp. 23 - 26.

<sup>172</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup>Tom Gallagher, University of Leeds, as reported in "Roundtable:...", p. 31.

<sup>174</sup>Shafir and Ionescu, "Romania..." p. 126.

<sup>175</sup>Robert Cullen, "Report From Romania: Down With the Tyrant," *The New Yorker*, 2 April 1990, p. 18.

prevailed until recently, but Tokes' support grew after a compromise with the government over bilingual street signs fell through, just as he predicted. Since then, the HDFR has reflected Tokes' doubts about the government's honesty and genuine concern in dealing with minority problems.<sup>176</sup>

There are three other political movements of importance. The Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (DFGR) was established in January 1990. Although nominally an ethnic association vice a true political party, the group does engage in political activities. The DFGR is somewhat pro-government, but it also advocates measures such as a comprehensive minority law, dual citizenship, and the restitution of land confiscated under communism. The ultimate goal of the Germans is to re-organize into several compact settlements in order to protect their social, economic and cultural activities. High-ranking officials, including the president, have received Germans in the past in order to discuss possible solutions to their particular problems. The government has shown sympathy for most of the DFGR's claims, with the exception of continued separate schools, because the government wants to avoid setting a precedent for Magyar demands.<sup>177</sup> The existence of the DFGR could potentially furnish a basis for continuing the tradition of German mediation between the other ethnic groups, although its voice has been substantially weakened by the German population decline in Romania.

The Romanies have also formed a political party in an attempt to protect their individual and collective rights, as well as to foster ties with the international Gypsy community. The Democratic Union of Romanies in Romania (DURR) is the largest of six Gypsy parties. Ion Onoriu is the President, with the "King of the Gypsies," Iulian, acting as deputy. The DURR is pro-Iliescu, having supported his presidential candidacy.<sup>178</sup> One final political faction that probably receives more attention in the Western press than in Romania centers on the deposed monarchy. Former King Michael II, who now resides in Switzerland, is the rallying symbol for some royalists who believe that he could reconstitute the fabled 'Greater Romania.' However, the royalists are a marginal group at best. The Romanians voted overwhelmingly for a

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<sup>176</sup>Shafir and Ionescu, "Romania..."

<sup>177</sup>Dan Ionescu, "Countdown for the German Minority?" RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe, Vol. 2, No. 37, 13 Sept. 1991, pp. 35 - 36.

<sup>178</sup>Dan Ionescu, "The Gypsies Organize," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 1, No. 26, 29 June 1990, pp. 39 - 42.

republican constitution in the referendum of 1990, and President Iliescu has stated that Michael's return as anything other than an ordinary citizen is out of the question.<sup>179</sup>

## 2. Extreme Nationalism in Romania

There are two types of nationalism in today's world. One is based on nationalism as a prejudice, such as racism or clanism. This form is characterized by a tendency to serve the family or clan at the expense of others, who are perceived to infringe upon it. The French and American revolutions brought with them a second type of nationalism, characterized by the belief that all people are equal and have certain inalienable rights. This type of nationalism is more in line with healthy patriotism, as it espouses the idea that no nation is intrinsically superior to any other, but it still fosters loyalty to one's own country.<sup>180</sup>

Modern Romanian nationalism, as noted before, is based upon attitudes of superiority over people who are not ethnic Romanians. The years of totalitarian rule under both left and rightist governments aggravated these attitudes. Ceausescu's communism depended upon nationalist allegiance as a legitimizing influence, but it is only one of the factors in the survival of hyper-nationalist tendencies in Romania. Other reasons include the perceived threat of Hungarian irredentism, the violent disintegration of neighboring multi-ethnic states such as Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, and the nation's protective tendencies towards infant Moldovan independence, especially when this appears threatened by Russia.<sup>181</sup>

About one year after Ceausescu's fall, the first signs of re-emerging prejudice began to appear. Vile anti-Semitic articles were published by groups referring to themselves as the modern Iron Guard. The authors claimed to be avenging their comrades who had fallen under communism (which is blamed on the minorities) and in reaction to an international Jewish conspiracy. The authenticity of the authors as old

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<sup>179</sup>Rzeczpospolita. Interview with Ion Iliescu in Polish. pp. 1, 18, as reported and translated in "Iliescu on Russian 'Traditions'. Regional Ties." FBIS Daily Report. FBIS-EEU-94-021, 1 Feb. 1994, p. 26.

<sup>180</sup>William Pfaff. The Wrath of Nations, Civilization and the Fury of Nationalism (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

<sup>181</sup>Michael Shafir. "Transylvanian Shadows, Transylvanian Lights." RFE/RL Research Report. Vol. 1, No. 26, 26 June 1992, p. 28.

members of the Guard is doubtful, since many of the supposed "facts" in the articles are incorrect.<sup>182</sup> However, the re-emergence of past sentiments is indisputable.

The PRNU, based primarily in Transylvania, is at the forefront of radical opinions. This party has mastered the technique of playing upon culturally based nationalist fears for its own purposes. A vicious circle exists in Romanian politics as a result of the deep mistrust ethnic Romanians have of their fellow citizens who are from ethnic minorities; the latter fear the former. Whenever one side makes a move, the other interprets the action through its own perceptual lens, which usually distorts the significance of the move. The second group then counteracts, exacerbating the original problem without coming close to a solution. Radicals use and encourage this cycle for their own advantage, maneuvering to gain ever-increasing right-wing support.

Much of the popular apprehension between Hungarians and Romanians is a result of nationalist history. Early history has been retold by both countries to suit their respective purposes, while modern history is used to document specific crimes attributed to the opposing side. For example, a 1993 Romanian study dedicated to the "unbiased" history of Transylvania concludes by stating unequivocally that Transylvania was first settled by the Romanian people of Daco-Romanian origin and then "penetrated" by the Hungarians.<sup>183</sup> The authors then proceed to state that "in Romania the Magyars are not oppressed and persecuted, quite the contrary, we may say that obstacles are put in the way of the cultural and religious development of the Romanian[s] by those Magyars and Szeklers who did not give up the chauvinistic and revisionist practices [of the past]."<sup>184</sup> The book ends by admonishing all Hungarian scholars to "tell the TRUTH to the entire Hungarian nation."<sup>185</sup> The trouble is reconciling these historical accounts to a common point from which to work. "As long as historical controversies continue to dominate contemporary politics, Transylvania will be open to political manipulation by interests who have everything to gain from prolonging sterile quarrels and much to fear from the onset of a political agenda concerned with tackling problems that know no ethnic bounds."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>Shafir, "Anti-Semitism..." p. 22.

<sup>183</sup>Ioan N. Ciolan, Constantin Voicu and Mihai Racovitan, Transylvania: Romanian History and Perpetuation or What Official Hungarian Documents Say. (Bucharest: Military Publishing House, 1993), p. 423.

<sup>184</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 428.

<sup>185</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 429; emphasis in original.

<sup>186</sup>Gallagher, "Roundtable..." p. 28.

The first post-revolutionary social unrest in Romania occurred in March 1990. Relative ethnic harmony existed until this time. Violent clashes between ethnic Romanians and Hungarians in Tirgu-Mures exploded at the very moment when neighboring Moldova was discussing autonomy from the Soviet Union and eventual reunification with Romania. The Moldavian SSR was formed by the Soviets after World War II by carving up several territories. To the old Moldavian ASSR on the left bank of the Dniester river was added the central portions of Bessarabia. The northern and southern portions of that region, in addition to northern Bukovina, were given to Ukraine. The Moldavian ASSR was itself created from Ukrainian lands after the Russian civil war.

As a result of this shuffle, Moldova is also an ethnically mixed state. Right bank Moldovans are ethnically Romanian, while the left bank Moldovans feel they are a unique Latin-based nationality, owing to a separate culture developed over the centuries while part of the Russian and Soviet empires. There are also large numbers of Russian-speaking Slavs in the area. The left bank declared its own independence from Moldova and established the "Dniester Republic." One of the driving forces behind this split was the minorities' fear of treatment at the hands of the Romanians in a greater Romanian state.<sup>187</sup> The Tirgu-Mures clashes underscored the discriminatory treatment of Romania's minorities. Indeed, radical nationalists have claimed that the violence was incited by the ethnic minorities in a successful effort to dissuade the Moldovan minorities.<sup>188</sup>

Romanian hyper-nationalism is not confined to purifying and unifying present day Romania. The old dreams of attaining a 'Greater Romania' still exist. For example, most ethnic Romanians today believe that Moldova belongs to their nation. The Second Soviet Congress of People's Deputies declared the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact illegal at the same time as the Romanian revolution. This led to widespread euphoria because the Romanian people interpreted this decision as an annulment of Bessarabia's annexation from the Old Kingdom. When time proved this wrong, a unification movement developed, led by Bessarabian intellectuals who had fled during the war. This movement demanded that Romania absorb Moldova, and Ukrainian Bessarabia, as well as the Transdniester (even though the latter territory had never been a part of

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<sup>187</sup>Pål Kolstø and Andrei Edemsky with Natalya Kalashnikova, "The Dniester Conflict: Between Irredentism and Separatism," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 6, 1993, pp. 980 - 81.

<sup>188</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." p. 30.

Romania), into the unitary state. These nationalists wanted to 'have their cake and eat it too' by arguing on separate grounds for each region. The annexed territories are claimed using legal precedent, while the Transdnister is argued for on demographic grounds, even though the Moldovans there don't claim Romanian ties.<sup>189</sup>

Meanwhile, a public opinion survey taken in mid-1994 indicates that the number one fear in Romania is Hungarian aggression. 59 percent believed Hungary was "dangerous" and 41 percent considered Hungary a potential aggressor. Yet Hungary could claim Transylvania on grounds similar to Romania's Moldovan claims. The same survey found Russia the second largest potential aggressor with 17%, Serbia 9%, and Ukraine 3%.<sup>190</sup> The fear of external intrusions persists, despite other states stressing the lack of border disputes with Romania. Anton Melescanu, the Romanian Foreign Minister, went so far as to chastise Ukraine over issues identical to Hungarian complaints. Melescanu said that he "cannot watch indifferently the degradation or destruction of Romanian vestiges and historical monuments in Ukraine's territory, and the measures that prevent the free expression of the Romanian's opinions."<sup>191</sup> These words, and the fact that one-third of Romanians live outside Romania's current borders, suggest that the different sides could agree on the treatment of minorities as a common concern. Nevertheless, the nationalistic prejudice in Romania prevents the government from seeing events from an objective perspective.

### 3. Romanian Politics in Action

Romanian political life is as complex as the system of political parties. All of the volatile elements of society - nationalism, economics, ethnic differences, international anxieties, and the lack of constitutional clarity - come together in this arena. Elections, the most basic of democratic principles, are probably affected the most. The May 1992 Tirgu-Mures elections are an example of the turmoil. Stefan Kali Kiraly, the HDFR mayoral candidate, was removed from the electoral list by a court acting on right-wing allegations. The PRNU accused Kiraly of unpatriotic activity. They claimed that he had led a group of Hungarians in seizing a bakery during the 1990 clashes, and that Kiraly had broken into the local council's headquarters on 22

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<sup>189</sup>Kolstø, Edemsky and Kalashnikova.

<sup>190</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough...", p. 29.

<sup>191</sup>"Melescanu on Romanians in Ukraine. Elsewhere," FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-014-A, 21 Jan. 1994, p. 9.

December 1989. Even though both charges were ridiculous (he had suffered a beating by ethnic Romanians and was hospitalized during the bakery takeover, and the second allegation was tantamount to condemning the entire Bucharest government since the overthrow of Ceausescu, and Iliescu's subsequent rise to power, occurred under similar circumstances on the same day), the court backed the PRNU, and ignored an appeal by the Romanian Prosecutor General in support of the HDFR. Despite this, the ethnic Hungarians switched candidates and still managed to win with 53% of the vote and 14 of 26 seats. However, the affair was not settled. The new mayor was forced to resign when an electoral commission discovered that voter fraud, albeit unintentional, had been committed. A second election administered by the central government finally settled the issue in favor of the ethnic Hungarian minority.<sup>192</sup>

The HDFR's victory prevented further violence in Turgu-Mures, but the minorities have not always been as fortunate. The mayoral elections in Cluj, a city of 25% ethnic Hungarians, were won by none other than Gheorge Funar, aforementioned head of the radical PRNU. The campaign was run on ethnic fears from the start, and his victory worsened relations. Claiming to be searching for hoarded goods sent to the Hungarian Church from abroad and redistributed to the masses, Funar had the police break into and search several churches and private residences. The searches were brutal and included the ripping up of floorboards and the like. Eventually the police were forced to admit that they had been looking for weapons on a tip from the Romanian Intelligence Service. This led to an outcry by the HDFR, which has always been critical of the service's discriminatory activity. Next, Funar ordered all Hungarian-language signs, placards, and posters to be removed, including street signs. Furthermore, all announcements and advertisements henceforth had to be in Romanian. Fines for non-compliance were assessed every second day. This led Funar to joke that he was "contributing to overcoming the country's financial crisis."<sup>193</sup> Hungarian-language meetings and media were later banned as well, since "Hungarian separatists could use them to send secret messages to Budapest."<sup>194</sup> Funar's actions were based on a selective (if not illegal) reading of the constitution and laws, but the central government was forced to tolerate such actions because of Iliescu's need for PRNU support to maintain power.

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<sup>192</sup>Shafir, "Transylvanian Shadows..." pp. 31 - 33.

<sup>193</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>194</sup>*Ibid.*



Bucharest has also been known to directly interfere with local administration at the behest of minorities as well. The counties of Harghita and Covasna have ethnic Hungarian minorities which make up 84.6% and 75.2% of the population respectively. In July 1992, the ethnic Hungarian Prefects were removed in both counties in favor of ethnic Romanians. Prefects, unlike mayors and local council members, are direct representatives of the central government at the local level. The public reaction was so strong that joint prefects were established ten days later. The unprecedented move of having two prefects, one an ethnic Romanian and one an ethnic Hungarian, further clouded lines of authority and did little to appease the local population. Bucharest claimed that the action was taken because the original prefects were members of the HDFR, an opposition party, and therefore could not represent the PDSR fairly. What wasn't considered was the appointment of non-HDFR ethnic Hungarians to the posts, or at the very least, mainstream Romanian politicians instead of extreme nationalists. These appointments led to the further hardening of the HDFR's stance, swaying more moderates toward Tokes' position. The entire affair illustrated the dangerous reaction cycle of Romanian politics, which may undermine regional stability.<sup>195</sup>

#### 4. Assessment

The continuing escalation of the war of words among Romania's political parties blocks any pragmatic approach by the government to correct the social ills of the country. The tension between the institutional establishment and the Magyars is compounded by the fact that animosity toward ethnic minorities runs across Romanian party lines. The Law on Education illustrates this point. This legislation omitted the right to native language instruction at all levels of public education and vocational training, and failed to reinstate government financing of education in minority Church schools. In addition, private schools are henceforth required to teach history, geography and civic education courses solely in the Romanian language. The HDFR challenged the bill in Parliament, but their amendments were defeated by a vote of 206 to 39 as a result of their fellow opposition members (who are ethnic Romanian) aligning with the nationalists.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>195</sup>Michael Shafir, "Minorities Council Raises Questions," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 2, No. 24, 11 June 1993, pp. 37 - 38.

<sup>196</sup>Shafir, "Ethnic Tension..." p. 26.

The PDSR's opposition is in disarray. The aftermath of the June 1994 initiatives brought inter-party divisions into the open and revealed their inability to unite or to enforce some semblance of party discipline.<sup>197</sup> Meanwhile, Iliescu's hold on power is also tenuous. There are indications that the majority of PDSR members are aware of the need for moderation and compromise with the minorities in order to ease the tension which endangers relations with the West and thus endangers Romania's future prosperity. Yet, Prime Minister Vacaroiu's dependence upon Funar's party prevents improvements in inter-ethnic affairs and in bilateral relations with Hungary, for the warming of relations would undermine the PRNU's basic tenets and call into question their very existence.<sup>198</sup> A link in this cycle of mistrust must be broken before the Romanian government can, in good faith, enter negotiations with Hungary over the removal of impediments to a cordial relationship.

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<sup>197</sup>Shafir, "Romanian Politics...", p. 7.

<sup>198</sup>Shafir, "Ethnic Tension...", pp. 24, 26.



## IV. CURRENT ISSUES

### A. BILATERAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

The primary source of Hungarian-Romanian friction is the Romanian province of Transylvania, which is important to the national myth of both nations. Transylvania was essential to the survival of Magyar culture during the centuries of Turkish suzerainty over the Hungarian plain. 1.6 million Magyars remain in the province as a result.<sup>199</sup> Likewise, the Romanian intellectual revival began in Transylvania and spread to the other principalities in 1848 - 1866.<sup>200</sup> Ethnic tension, including attempted Magyarization of ethnic Romanians, has been a part of life in the region for centuries. However, the transfer of Transylvanian ownership to Romania aggravated the situation by producing a territorial dispute as well. The Romanians originally followed an enlightened policy towards their newfound minorities. In December 1918, the Romanian National Assembly promised broad linguistic and cultural rights, but the state failed to live up to its pledges.<sup>201</sup> Romania also signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain (1919) guaranteeing the rights and citizenship of all minorities acquired from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The complicated problems of Transylvania went unaddressed at the end of the Second World War, despite American Secretary of State Cordell Hull's belief in the necessity to take action.<sup>202</sup> The 1947 Paris Peace Treaty confirmed Romanian ownership of Transylvania.<sup>203</sup>

Romania and Hungary desire improved ties, including a bi-lateral state treaty re-affirming what has already been stated in other international documents. "From the [Hungarian] point of view of establishing stable, cooperative neighborly relations with our neighboring states, prime importance is attached to strengthening economic, human rights and minority cooperation between our countries. The requisite basis for this can be provided by the new fundamental treaties, whose positive effect is reinforced by the international agreements on conventional disarmament and confidence building, and by the bilateral agreements which regulate bilateral military relations and also cover

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<sup>199</sup>Bennett Kovrig, "Hungarian Minorities in East-Central Europe," Occasional Paper Series: The Atlantic Council of the United States, March 1994, p. v.

<sup>200</sup>Cohen, "The Jewish Question...", p. 196.

<sup>201</sup>Kovrig, p. 4.

<sup>202</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." pp. 27, 30.

<sup>203</sup>Kovrig, p. v.

confidence building measures."<sup>204</sup> Budapest and Bucharest understand the need to resolve their disputes as a prerequisite to full integration into European political, economic and security structures. However, tensions in Transylvania remain. "As long as historical controversies continue to dominate contemporary politics, Transylvania will be open to political manipulation by interests who have everything to gain from prolonging sterile quarrels and much to fear from the onset of a political agenda concerned with tackling problems that know no ethnic bounds."<sup>205</sup>

The development of a bi-lateral treaty has reached an impasse for two reasons. First, the Hungarians refuse to include provisions explicitly renouncing any future intentions to change the existing border arrangement, including the ownership of Transylvania. Hungary claims that the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, which prohibits territorial expansion by force, as well as the treaties of Trianon and Paris, adequately cover the issue. For its part, Romania points to the recently concluded Hungarian-Ukrainian Treaty that includes an inviolability of frontiers statement, and wonders why the same can not be done in its case. The Romanian PDSR also wants an explanation for statements made by Hungarian officials which appear to back the need for such a clause. Lajos Fur, the Hungarian Minister of Defense in 1992, stated on the eve of Romanian parliamentary elections that "safeguarding Hungarians everywhere was an 'inseparable facet' of the security of his nation, adding that the Hungarian government 'should do everything in their power, using all legal and diplomatic means, to end the threat to the minorities and to guarantee their survival.'"<sup>206</sup> Although such statements are often made for domestic political purposes rather than for international reasons, they only provide more ammunition with which Romania's extremist parties can thwart warming Romanian-Hungarian relations, the improvement of which would be detrimental to the extreme nationalist cause.

The second problem blocking a treaty is Romania's unwillingness to guarantee the collective rights of its Magyars, including the establishment of consulates in cities densely populated by Hungarian minorities, such as Cluj.<sup>207</sup> The Budapest government

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<sup>204</sup>"Basic Principles of the Security Policy of the Republic of Hungary," *European Security*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer 1994), p. 356.

<sup>205</sup>Tom Gallagher, "Roundtable:..." p. 28.

<sup>206</sup>Shafir, "Transylvanian Shadows..." p. 29.

<sup>207</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.

recently passed an extraordinarily liberal minorities law<sup>208</sup> for its citizens in an effort to foster the same liberal attitudes in states with Hungarian minorities, and has officially stated that "the national minority problem must be solved on a basis of internationally codified and legally binding norms and principles, with active international cooperation. [These issues] should not be treated exclusively as the internal affair of the country concerned, but as a question of security and human rights that affects the security of the whole region."<sup>209</sup>

Meanwhile, Romania has yet to sign the European Convention on Human Rights and Basic Freedoms or the European Charters on Self-Government, Regional and Minority Languages.<sup>210</sup> Romania has been unwilling to pass legislation dealing with collective rights because it fears minority power, and firmly holds to the idea of allegiance to the state, as opposed to one's ethnic group, as being the primary requirement for citizenship. Furthermore, "Romania suspects Budapest's interests in and support for ethnic demands in Transylvania as interference in its domestic affairs and has never ceased to suspect Budapest of cherishing irredentist designs on Transylvania and the Banat, which were given to Romania under the 1920 Treaty of Trianon."<sup>211</sup> The minorities within Romania do have parliamentary representation, including a guaranteed seat in case a person of minority ethnic origin is not elected.<sup>212</sup> However, Magyars have not enjoyed true equality to date.

The main problem in the ethnic controversy lies in the distorted image each ethnic community holds of the other. The Romanian lack of experience in handling minority problems has further exacerbated the situation. The revision of history for political expedience is the most fundamental basis for mistrust. Hungarians and Romanians share the blame for this equally. For example, each society holds that the other consists of descendants of nomadic herdsmen coming from Asia or the Balkans, and therefore considers the other inferior.<sup>213</sup> The ceremonial burial of Admiral Miklos Horthy in September 1993 is a more recent example of how history is construed differently by each party. The Romanians see Horthy, the Hungarian ruler in 1920-44,

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<sup>208</sup>Edith Oltay, "Hungary Passes Law on Minority Rights," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 2, No. 33.

<sup>209</sup>Aug. 1993, pp. 57 - 61.

<sup>210</sup>"Basic Principles..." pp. 356 - 57.

<sup>211</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough..." p. 27.

<sup>212</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough..." p. 26.

<sup>213</sup>Ionescu on Russian..." p. 27.

<sup>214</sup>Cazacu, "Roundtable:..." p. 30.

as the embodiment of Hungarian irredentism since it was he who lost Transylvania in the Vienna Award. On the other hand, Horthy is considered somewhat of a national hero in Hungary, in recognition for his stance against Hitler in opposing the deportation of Hungarian Jews to the infamous death camps. The official Romanian reaction to the reburial was hostile, culminating in public commemoration of wartime mass executions of Romanian citizens by Hungarian troops.<sup>214</sup> This move hardly impressed Budapest.

Establishment of a Romanian Council of National Minorities on March 24, 1993, was intended to help assuage Romanian Magyar concerns. One of the chief demands of the HDFR (the ethnic Hungarian political party in Romania) had been the creation of a ministry whose "expertise and goodwill would be focused on dealing with the specific problems of ethnic minorities."<sup>215</sup> The Council's charter states that its purpose is to "deal with judicial, administrative and financial matters related to the exercise of rights, liberties and duties of persons belonging to ethnic minority groups... with the aim of fostering the conservation, development and expression of their cultural, linguistic and religious identity within the provisions of law."<sup>216</sup>

From the Council's inception, minority groups were wary of its true purpose. The phrase, 'within the provisions of law', was taken by many to mean 'according to the will of Bucharest.' The misgivings of the minorities were rooted in their communist experience. Ceausescu often followed the tactic of "simulated change," meaning the setting up of bodies allegedly reflecting change, but lacking real power or the will to implement such change. Their fears were proven correct. The Council was originally established to impress the Council of Europe whose membership the Romanians had been seeking for years. The announcement also coincided nicely with the aforementioned appointment of ethnic Romanian prefects in Harghita and Covasna. Whether the Council was created exclusively for these purposes, or was later manipulated by the extreme nationalists is unknown. In any event, the Council quickly took matters into its own hands. Its by-laws and governing procedures were altered by the members so that, today, the Council acts free of central authority.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>214</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough..." p. 28.

<sup>215</sup>Shafir, "Minorities Council..." p. 35.

<sup>216</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>217</sup>Ibid.

The possibility for a treaty still exists, despite the grave misgivings on both sides. Both states realize that improved relations would positively affect regional stability and be beneficial economically. In light of this, both sides are continuing diplomatic efforts at reconciliation. Geza Jeszenszky, then the Hungarian Foreign Minister, visited Romania last September. During the visit, Mr. Jeszenszky stated that the "Hungarian government will never help or encourage...those who might want to break inter ethnic harmony here in Transylvania. The common goal [of both nations] is to show that Romanians and ethnic-Hungarians can live together peacefully."<sup>218</sup> President Iliescu later responded by saying that "the only approach for a realistic politician is to recognize the present borders between states. Trying to solve all such [border] issues might take forever."<sup>219</sup> Hungary's new government appears even more favorable to reform efforts, but the political realities in Romania can not be ignored.

Improvements in bi-lateral relations is a positive sign. Both sides will continue to seek regional ties in addition to Western support. The Western nations have avoided decisive involvement in Bosnia, and it is doubtful that a Transylvanian conflict would draw much sympathy for either Budapest or Bucharest. Removing the major obstacle to the treaty, Romanian minority rights, would solve several immediate crises. More comprehensive laws would help to resolve the concerns of the international community, Hungary, and the minority parties. If the minority parties and Hungarian officials would refrain from making rash statements, mainstream Romanians would be less likely to support the extreme nationalist parties. This would give Iliescu a broader political base from which to begin real reforms. Hungary could help the process as well. Its stance on the inviolability of borders has been criticized on several grounds. First, the clauses in the 1975 Helsinki accords were directed at Germany, so additional treaties make sense. Second, redundancy of treaties can do no harm if Budapest has no irredentist intentions. Finally, Hungarian territorial expansion would be ill-advised. The incorporation of 6 million Romanians and only 2 million Magyars (the population of Transylvania) would severely alter Hungary's demographic makeup (Hungary's population today, it will be recalled, consists of 10.6 million people). A clause on the inviolability of borders would alleviate Romanian concerns, thereby reducing anti-

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<sup>218</sup>Ionescu and Reisch. "Still No Breakthrough..." p. 30.

<sup>219</sup>Kievskiy Vedomosti, interview with Iliescu, 15 Jan. 1994, p. 3, as translated and reported in "Iliescu Comments on NATO, Ties with Ukraine." FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-94-017, 26 Jan. 1994, p. 32.



Hungarian sentiment and thus helping the very people Budapest wished to assist, the Romanian Magyars.

## **B. ECONOMICS**

### **1. Hungary**

Hungary has made significant advances in attaining a market economy based on private ownership since 1990. This has boosted the nation's overall economic conditions. Claims to the contrary fail to take into account the communist methods for deriving economic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product and industrial output. The disparity between the old system and Western techniques (which were established in Hungary in 1992) makes it impossible to compare modern data with the days of central planning. The HSP's recent electoral victory was a reflection of the public's negative perceptions of the country's economy. The reality of the situation is that today's economy is not worse, but the people of Hungary now understand how bad it really was. Private enterprises in Hungary have increased from 10,000 in 1990 to over 200,000 in 1994 and proprietorships have nearly reached 700,000 from 200,000 under communist reform.<sup>220</sup> However, the state sector (primarily energy producers) still accounted for 77% of the Hungarian GDP in 1992.<sup>221</sup> The restructuring of state-owned banks and enterprises prior to privatization has been a failure and has increased the government's long-term debt. Only a fraction of these businesses have been privatized to date.<sup>222</sup>

The international market has always been important to Hungary's economy. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the Warsaw Pact's trade group, accounted for 34 percent of the nation's imports and 31.9 percent of exports in 1990. Furthermore, 43.2 percent of the income from exports was used to service a \$21.3 billion foreign debt.<sup>223</sup> Hungary's dependence on foreign trade increased in 1992 with the lifting of European Union trade barriers as a result of the trade portion of Hungary's association agreement. Today, Hungary attracts close to 50 percent of the

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<sup>220</sup>Karoly Okolicsanyi, "Macroeconomic Changes in Hungary, 1990 - 1994," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 24, 17 June 1994, pp. 21, 25.

<sup>221</sup>Karoly Okolicsanyi, "The Hungarian State Sector's Dismal Performance," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 15, 15 April 1994, p. 23.

<sup>222</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>223</sup>Okolicsanyi, "Macroeconomic..." p. 21.

total capital flowing into the former communist countries because of tax incentives, low-cost labor, and relative political stability. In 1993 foreign investment and loans reached \$8.6 billion, and Budapest's borrowing from the IMF did not approach its limit for the second straight year. Social welfare programs created under communism, such as government health insurance and pensions with a retirement age of 60, have perpetuated high budget deficits. "Despite its debt load, Hungary quickly gained the reputation of being more friendly to business than any of the other former communist countries, partly because it opened itself to foreign investment in a way that none of the others did. Private businesses now have everything they require to operate efficiently and profitably, and they are doing so in an environment that is rapidly becoming similar to that in Western Europe."<sup>224</sup>

## 2. Romania

The social and political problems in eastern Europe are closely connected to economic ones. Romania started its economic reform from an inferior initial position compared to that of the other former non-Soviet Warsaw Pact states. The GNP per capita in Romania at the end of communism was only \$2,290 (measured in 1989 US dollars) compared to \$2,590 in neighboring Hungary. The GNP growth rate had also rapidly declined over the last several decades to 1.8%. A two-tier banking system was established in 1990, ending direct central bank involvement in commercial affairs; and privatization was begun in 1991. Bucharest was the last East European capital to implement both of these reforms. The initial price shock of reform "turned out [to be] substantially larger than expected, but within six months of the program inflation came down to 2-3% per month in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary,"<sup>225</sup> while Romania's monthly inflation rate never came below 10% (doubling the next closest state, Bulgaria). By the end of 1991, no other state's inflation was above 20%, while Romania's reached hyper-inflationary levels. The Romanian citizens were well aware of their economic circumstances compared to those in the other states.<sup>226</sup>

Many factors hamper Romania's transition to a free market. "A critical problem is the transition from a relatively egalitarian and well endowed social welfare network to a market system in which all the income and wealth distribution problems,

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<sup>224</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>225</sup>Bruno, "Stabilization and Reform...", pp. 747, 749, 753 and 760.

<sup>226</sup>*Ibid.*

unemployment risks, and other adverse social side effects of free capitalism suddenly emerge."<sup>227</sup> "The strongly conservative mood that prevailed in the omnipresent state sector during the long regime of Nicolae Ceausescu (1965 - 1989) discouraged the kind of economic experiments being tried in Hungary."<sup>228</sup> The lack of experience in implementing reform, both politically and economically, and the scarcity of resources and capital needed to modernize the business sector also inhibit the privatization process. As a result, Romania's economy relies heavily on credits from international lending institutions. The IMF is Romania's major foreign lender since the state can not afford Western interest rates. The credits Romania has acquired are used mainly to meet consumption demands and not to boost production or to service the \$3.3 billion foreign debt.<sup>229</sup>

Thus, ethnic strife is not the only difficulty Romania must contend with. Economic pressure will act in two distinct ways. First, the already weak government will be forced to seek support from the political extremes to counter growing public animosity. Second, the ethnic minorities will feel not only the effects shared by other Romanians, but will also be forced to bear additional burdens because of unequal laws, discrimination, and the need for political scapegoats. The Romanian economic condition was a root cause of ethnic and nationalist tensions as early as the mid-1980s. The sharp real wage cuts, the fall in living standards and the rise in unemployment since 1989 have fuelled ethnic prejudice. "The impending internal social problems in [Romania] will no doubt put all of the reform efforts to a serious test, as political democratization proceeds and the possibility of bliss recedes."<sup>230</sup>

### C. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

"The Central European states find that their greatest security threats emanate from internal developments."<sup>231</sup> Social tensions within states have led to conflict and instability within the region, as is the case between Romania and Hungary. The

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<sup>227</sup>Michael Bruno, "Stabilization and Reform in Eastern Europe: A Preliminary Evaluation," IMF Staff Papers, Vol. 39, No. 4, Dec. 1992, pp. 767 - 68.

<sup>228</sup>Dan Ionescu, "Romania's Standby Agreement with the IMF," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3, No. 18, 6 May 1994, pp. 21 - 26.

<sup>229</sup>Ibid., pp. 21 - 22.

<sup>230</sup>Bruno, "Stabilization and Reform...", p. 776.

<sup>231</sup>Jiri Dienstbier, "Central Europe's Security," Foreign Policy, No. 83, Summer 1991, p. 126.

association with, and eventual full membership in, organizations such as NATO and the European Union is the main means by which these states seek to address their internal problems. "The principal objective [of association and membership] is to integrate the economies and particularly the societies of Central Europe into an economic, social, cultural, and political environment that by its very nature is conducive to the adoption of European standards and norms."<sup>232</sup> Hungary officially acknowledges this principle by stating that its security "rests on the premise that the EU, NATO, the CSCE, the Western European Union (WEU), the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the CoE [Council of Europe] will continue to play an active part in strengthening the region's economic and political stability, supporting reforms that point towards democratic conditions and a market economy and reforming the defense sphere, developing effective crisis and conflict handling mechanisms, rebuilding the region's system of international relations, and integrating it into the new European Security structure."<sup>233</sup> The Romanian Foreign Minister also believes that "collective support - extended by organizations such as the EC, WEU, and NATO - should continuously complement bilateral relations"<sup>234</sup> and are important in the continuance of democratic and free market transitions.

## 1. NATO

Hungary and Romania seek NATO membership as a result of NATO's "valuable contribution to the improvement of security and stability in Europe."<sup>235</sup> and its preeminent position in the current European security structure because, its guarantees are backed by the U.S.<sup>236</sup> The core purposes of the alliance, "to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure, to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur, and to pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship in which underlying

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<sup>232</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>233</sup>"Basic Principles..." p. 355.

<sup>234</sup>Anton Melescanu, "Security in Central Europe: a Positive-sum Game," *NATO Review*, October 1993, p. 15.

<sup>235</sup>NATO, "Statement Issued at the Meeting of Defence Ministers at NATO Headquarters, Brussels on 25th May, 1994," Press Communiqué M-DMCP-1 (94) 39, p. 1.

<sup>236</sup>Christian Catrina, "Partnership for Peace." Report for the UNIDIR Conference "Transatlantic Relations and International Security, 22 - 23 September 1994," p. 2.

political issues can be solved,"<sup>237</sup> obviously would help the security of both states. Membership would also assuage Romanian fears of Hungarian irredentism since NATO also professes to provide security "based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any European nation or to impose hegemony through the threat or use of force."<sup>238</sup> Furthermore, "NATO plays a crucial role [in] helping to manage ethnic and national conflict."<sup>239</sup> Thus, NATO represents the main guarantor of freedom, stability and security in Europe.

The dilemma facing both Romania and Hungary is how to become full members of NATO. The alliance has set no specific criteria to date. However, there is a growing understanding in Bucharest and Budapest that membership may be contingent upon the quality of their bilateral relations. This has prompted both governments to "enlarge and deepen contacts and cooperation in all fields"<sup>240</sup> as what some have called "window dressing" for the outside world. The real test of the strength of their relations resides in the ability to conclude a satisfactory bilateral treaty. It is possible that NATO officials will demand that "commitments be accompanied by capabilities and by clear demonstrations of political will"<sup>241</sup> as a means of evaluating a prospective member's resolve to uphold its commitments to the alliance's basis of collective defense. Thus, deeds speak louder than words. Membership may not, however, be contingent mainly upon Romanian or Hungarian actions. Some analysts believe that "only in case of anarchy [in Russia] culminating either in autocracy or in further disintegration will NATO be amenable to confer upon Central European states the member status to keep the turmoil away from its borders, on the eastern frontiers of Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary."<sup>242</sup> Therefore, Hungary and Romania must pursue policies aimed at NATO

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<sup>237</sup>NATO, "The Future Tasks of the Alliance (Harmel Report)," in NATO Facts and Figures, (Brussels: NATO Information Service, 1981), p. 288.

<sup>238</sup>NATO, "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept: Agreed By the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7th - 8th November 1991," Press Communiqué S-1 (91) 85, p. 5.

<sup>239</sup>"A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement," The White House (USGPO: Washington D.C.), July 1994, p. 22.

<sup>240</sup>Melescanu, p. 18.

<sup>241</sup>James Sherr, "Living With Russia in the Post-Soviet Era," presented to the NATO Central Region Intelligence & Security Conference, Brunssum, 8 - 9 July 1992, p. 9.

<sup>242</sup>Antoni Z. Kaminski, "Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Sources of Instability," presented to the NATO symposium, "NATO: The Challenge of Change, Washington, D.C." 26 - 27 April 1993, p. 10.

integration, even though membership may be contingent upon external factors beyond their control.

## 2. PFP

In the 1991 Rome Declaration NATO announced that it had "extended to the Central and Eastern European countries the hand of friendship and established regular diplomatic liaison. Therefore, as the next step, we [NATO] intend to develop a more institutional relationship of consultation and cooperation on political and security issues."<sup>243</sup> The Partnership for Peace (PFP) which resulted is conceived as a set of bilateral accords between NATO and states joining the PFP program. Romania became the first PFP state on 26 January 1994 and Hungary soon followed on 8 February.<sup>244</sup>

The PFP program is intended to enhance the political-military relationship between NATO and the PFP countries, thereby helping to promote regional stability and security as a side effect. The Partnership falls short of including members as allies within the framework of the Washington Treaty or acting as a guarantee for future membership. The program is "not intended as a venue for political consultations, except in the case of direct threat to territorial integrity, political independence or security. The more general security dialogue shall take place within the NACC,"<sup>245</sup> of which both Romania and Hungary are also members. Although PFP does not address all the Hungarian and Romanian needs, it nevertheless "provides at least some of the tools...to help inculcate in others those ideas and attitudes, beliefs and practices, which [in Western Europe] have made possible enduring peace."<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>243</sup>NATO, "Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7th - 8th November 1991." Press Communiqué S-1 (91) 86, p. 4.

<sup>244</sup>Catrina, p. 8.

<sup>245</sup>*Ibid.* p. 6.

<sup>246</sup>Robert E. Hunter, "New NATO Members Will Be Producers of Security," Remarks by the Ambassador to The Pilgrims Society in London, 19 September 1994.

### 3. CSCE

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which opened at Helsinki on 3 July 1973, was initially founded to promote human rights and solidify the recognition of existing borders in Europe.<sup>247</sup> Although initially aimed at preventing Soviet-Western conflict, the original tenets set forth apply to the current Hungarian-Romanian problems as well. The CSCE's realm of influence is continuing to expand in order to foster greater harmony between its members, including principles such as the right to free and fair elections, commitments to respect and uphold the rule of law, cooperation on environmental protection, and guidelines for economic cooperation focusing on the development of competitive market economies.<sup>248</sup> The organization's current High Commissioner on Minority Affairs believes that the CSCE has "a two-fold mission: first, to try to contain and de-escalate tensions concerning minority issues, and second, to alert the CSCE whenever such tensions threaten to develop to such a level that I would not be able to contain them with the means at my disposal."<sup>249</sup> Another strength of the CSCE is that it "can go places NATO cannot, because it wields no military threat and includes all the states of Europe, North America and the former Soviet Union on an equal basis. It can shape its missions to suit specific situations, and its consensus procedures lend these missions credibility."<sup>250</sup> However, the CSCE's ability to influence affairs is limited. The organization works on the unanimity principle, with every member holding veto power. Thus, the Romanians can legitimately stop any interference in Transylvania and the Hungarians can do likewise. Yet, NATO and the CSCE "remain the foundation stones of today's Europe."<sup>251</sup> Therefore, the CSCE is important to Hungary and Romania and can influence their relationship through addressing domestic problems.

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<sup>247</sup>"Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act Helsinki 1975," in John J. Maresca, To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1973 - 1975, Appendix II, (Duke University Press, 1985), pp. 227, 230 - 31.

<sup>248</sup>"The London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance: Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London on 5th-6th July 1990," United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington D.C., July 1990, p. 4.

<sup>249</sup>Max van der Stoep, "Preventing Conflict and Building Peace: A Challenge for the CSCE," NATO Review, August 1994, p. 11.

<sup>250</sup>John J. Maresca, "An Important Role for an Evolving CSCE: Preventive Diplomacy," International Herald Tribune, 23 Aug. 1994.

<sup>251</sup>"The Dream of Europax," The Economist, 7 Apr. 1990, p. 14.

#### 4. WEU

The Western European Union constitutes another security framework which Romania and Hungary would like to join, but its membership is even more exclusive than NATO's (since all of its members are also in NATO). "Conscious of the continuing necessity to strengthen western security and of specifically Western European geographical, political, psychological and military dimensions, the Ministers [at the 1984 Rome Summit] underlined their determination to make better use of the WEU framework in order to increase cooperation...preserve peace, strengthen deterrence and defense and thus consolidate stability through dialogue and cooperation."<sup>252</sup> European crises, which might not be considered vital national interests to Washington, and therefore might not entail U.S. intervention, might include a downturn in Hungarian-Romanian relations. Thus, the WEU could become a powerful actor in preserving and promoting peace between Budapest and Bucharest.

Hungarians firmly believe that integration with the West, actually re-integration in their minds, will allow the state to solve its current economic and security problems, ushering in a new era of prosperity. Leaders from both sides of the political spectrum in Hungary view integration with the West as the essential goal of foreign policy, although they disagree on the means of attaining their goal. This is not the case in Romania.

Romania's political, economic, and social problems (including its treatment of minorities) could stop Romanian integration into the European fold. The turmoil surrounding Romania's entrance into the Council of Europe in September of 1993 is an example of what can occur to derail the integration process. The Council agreed to Romania's membership, provided that Bucharest pass additional legislation on several issues, including ones dealing with minority problems. The French government sponsored Romania's membership, arguing that membership would facilitate democratization and provide leverage (the threat of expulsion) in forcing Bucharest to comply with human rights standards. Romania gained unanimous acceptance, with Hungary abstaining.<sup>253</sup> However, the entire issue was perceived quite differently in Romania.

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<sup>252</sup>"Rome Declaration," in *The Reactivation of WEU. Statements and Communiques 1984 - 1987*, (West Yorkshire, England: Newsomeprinters, Ltd., 1988), p. 5.

<sup>253</sup>Shafir and Ionescu, "Romania..." pp. 26, 32.



The political extremes (left and right) expressed grave reservations about acceptance of the membership terms. The nationalists were the most vocal, declaring that "the pride of the Romanian people, inherited from its Thracian ancestors, cannot be trampled on by [these] amendments. [The conditions] run counter to the customs and nature of the Romanian people, and even to Biblical precepts."<sup>254</sup> The media, which usually acts as an extension of the nationalists, propounds the idea that the West actually *needs* Romania because of its geopolitical position as a relatively stable state in a region of violent conflict. This attitude bodes poorly for the minorities since it removes any incentive the government has of following through with the 'mandatory' reforms. The HDFR, meanwhile, did everything possible to sabotage admittance until the demands of the minorities were met by the Bucharest government. Their actions culminated in a strongly worded message sent directly to the Council of Europe states. This move so infuriated the nationalists that they wanted to outlaw the HDFR as terrorists working for the Hungarian government.<sup>255</sup> Once again, the three way domestic fight between Romanian nationalists, moderates and minorities hampers the state in carrying out programs deemed essential for acceptance by the West.

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<sup>254</sup>Greater Romania Party as quoted in Dan Ionescu. "Romania Admitted to Council of Europe," RFE/RL Research Report. Vol. 2, No. 44. 5 Nov. 1993, pp. 44.

<sup>255</sup>Ionescu and Reisch, "Still No Breakthrough..." p. 27.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS**

### **A. ASSESSMENT OF PAST TRENDS**

The Romanian and Magyar (Hungarian) societies have interacted throughout their respective histories. Both cultures were greatly influenced by this relationship. They shared many common experiences, such as Turkish dominance and communism. However, these nations have been rivals since the Middle Ages and mutual animosity has developed as a result. The Trianon Peace Treaty (1920), which formally ended the First World War in East-Central Europe, compounded existing problems between Romania and Hungary. The Hungarian province of Transylvania was taken away by the allies and given to Romania as a reward for the latter state's alliance with the victors of the war. Transylvania was extremely important to Hungary's economic livelihood and represented nearly one-third of pre-war Hungary's total geographic territory. The Magyars suffered an emotional loss at Trianon as well. Over two million Magyars henceforth resided outside Hungary's borders, including over one million in Transylvania.

Meanwhile, Romania was equally affected by its acquisition of Transylvania. The Trianon Peace doubled the geographic extent of Romania and introduced huge numbers of ethnic minority citizens for the first time in the state's brief independence. Hard times ensued after the war, and the Bucharest government used these new "foreign" citizens as scapegoats for the country's problems. New state mechanisms in Romania resulted in institutionalized discrimination, which still exists today. Romanian nationalism endorsed ethnic superiority as its basis. The trend toward bigotry continued throughout the many radical shifts in Romanian governments. The fact that fascists, monarchists, and communist regimes alike all treated Romania's minorities in a similar fashion reinforced the acceptability of discrimination by ethnic Romanian citizens and engendered a sharp cleavage within the country, which continues to exist after the downfall of communism in 1989.

#### **1. Hungary**

Hungary's history and cultural traditions point at many common links with Western Europe. Hungary firmly believes it is a Western nation left outside the fold by recent historical circumstance. The dominance of Catholicism and Protestantism in

Hungary's religious community and the Germanic influence upon Magyar culture (as a result of Hungary's membership within the Austrian Empire) support this belief. Yet, these experiences are understandably overshadowed by the more recent involvement with communism. Hungary's traditional political, social and economic institutions were undeniably altered by communist rule. While Western nations may be sympathetic to Hungary's claims, they can not overlook what has transpired. Thus, Hungary, like the rest of East-Central Europe, must pursue its foreign policy objectives (security through Western association) based upon interests in addition to historical and cultural commonalities.

The return of Hungary's former communist politicians to power in the June 1994 election could impede the country's integration within the Western community. The election results could be perceived as representing an endorsement of the old socialist system, including the rejection of capitalism and democracy, by the general population. While the election results are disturbing, it is not out of concern for the potential return of communism in Hungary. The landslide victory gave the HSP unrestricted control of the nation politically, but the party seems disinclined to act too forcefully for fear of upsetting the fragile political stability which exists within the party and the nation as a whole. Thus it is in the socialists' interest to preserve Hungary's democratic institutions.

The HSP's victory is widely seen as a reaction to the severity of economic reform domestically, and the deadlock over Magyar rights internationally. These difficulties were blamed on policies pursued by the HSP's predecessors. The election results are also partly attributed to nostalgic feelings toward the welfare state. However, the HSP members represent a large segment of Hungary's current capitalist entrepreneurs. These people have the largest stake in seeing economic reforms come to fruition. The socialists, as a result of politics more than ideology, will have to make concessions to the working class by providing a larger welfare net, but returning to the state-run economy of the past appears doubtful. The real danger posed by the socialist return to power is the return of the client-patron system which crippled economic innovation and new political thought in the past. Such a system could once again corrupt the reform process and continue the stagnation of the nation's economy. This in turn could delay Hungary's integration with the West.

## **2. Romania**

Romania's cosmopolitan makeup has been a source of turmoil within the nation throughout the twentieth century. Romanian nationalism is built upon the concept of cultural superiority and its corollary, the denigration of foreigners and of minorities that are not ethnic Romanians. Loyalty to the state is the most important virtue expected of Romania's citizens. However, the loyalty of Romania's minority citizens is often called into question by their ethnic Romanian counterparts. The Magyars, Gypsies and other ethnic groups residing in Romania believe that the protection of their cultural identities requires collective or group rights. Without such rights their relatively small numbers will be absorbed, and their cultural roots overridden by the larger ethnic Romanian population. This appears to be a legitimate concern. The ethnic Romanians, on the other hand, believe that no such special privileges should be granted because collective rights would represent autonomy within the unitary state of Romania. This perspective is strengthened by the Romanian nationalist idea of cultural superiority and the fear of irredentist behavior by neighbors. Granting cultural autonomy to the Magyars is therefore seen as the first step toward their reunification with Hungary.

Hyper-nationalism fans the flames of ethnic discontent in Romania. Both sides, the ethnic Romanians and the Magyars (which constitute the only major ethnic minority remaining in Romania), have legitimate concerns about cultural rights and what citizenship entails. Their respective positions are not insurmountable in themselves. Common ground can be found from which acceptable solutions ending the hostilities could be reached. For example, Transylvania is home to all of the parties concerned, and their differences did not preclude working together to defeat the common enemy of communism in 1989. However, extreme nationalism promotes and is sustained by ethnic rifts. Ethnic strife provides membership and support vital to the perpetuation of these hyper-nationalist parties. Therefore, it behooves these groups to promote and perpetuate such tensions.

Since the Romanian Nationalist Unity Party's (PRNU) support is necessary to maintain the governing coalition, it is extremely difficult for the moderate members of the coalition to enact laws aimed at ending disputes on even minor issues concerning minority rights. Whether such laws would be enforced by the local authorities appears doubtful. Furthermore, it appears that the extreme nationalist parties will remain integral to any government coalition in the foreseeable future. This legislative deadlock

effectively cancels any hopes for Romania's reconciliation with its minorities for some time to come. Meanwhile, anti-Magyar campaigns continue to sow discontent throughout society.

### **3. Hungarian - Romanian Relations**

Hostility has existed between Romania and Hungary at varying intensities for a millennium. Expecting these two societies to trust and cooperate with one another simply because they have shed their communist burden is unreasonable. Both states have legitimate reasons to be skeptical of the other's intentions. The European revolutions of 1989 ushered in an atmosphere in which it was hoped that new relations devoid of past mistakes could be developed. Unfortunately, the subsequent years have proved that historical grievances can not be overcome that easily.

Budapest has failed to convince Romania of Hungary's acceptance of the Trianon Treaty (1920) or its role as a minor European state. From Romania's perspective, Hungary's firm stance regarding non-Hungarian Magyars reflects two distinct irredentist trends. First, Hungary's overbearing concern is seen as a desire, and perhaps even a program, for the return of the "Greater Hungarian State" encompassing all lands upon which Magyars reside. The second trend is less extreme but equally disturbing to Romania. Hungary's insistence upon clauses concerning Magyar rights has temporarily derailed the Hungarian - Romanian bilateral initiative. The question is whether Hungary wants the process derailed or, at the very least, is using Magyar rights for leverage against clauses concerning the inviolability of borders. The most likely hypothesis is that Hungary is legitimately concerned for the welfare of the Magyars and has no ulterior motives concerning the Magyar issue, yet Budapest has yet to take measures aimed at alleviating Romanian fears. Policies such as hiding behind the 1975 Helsinki Accords instead of approving a new border inviolability clause undermine any chance at building up trust between the nations. Hungary must address its past irredentist policies during the Horthy period both at home and abroad. As a first step, Budapest needs to educate its citizens about the risks of a Horthyist policy in today's international order while simultaneously explaining to the world what has changed within Hungarian society since 1945 that has eliminated any need or desire for Hungarian reacquisition of Transylvania. Only then will states such as Romania take Budapest's official word as the truth, without suspecting hidden agendas.

Romania's actions to improve its relations with Hungary have been unsatisfactory to date, but Hungary's approach simply exacerbates the dilemma. Bucharest wants the world to believe that Romania has changed since the fall of Ceausescu, but there is little of substance to prove these claims. Democracy of a sort does exist, but minorities are only grudgingly given a political voice. More importantly, there have been no attempts to transform the attitudes in Romanian society in general. Discrimination is an entrenched fact of life, and the government leads by example. Until this situation is rectified, there will be no improvement in inter-ethnic relations within Romania.

Hungary should understand the political realities within Romania, and accept a slow process of reform in Romania in exchange for disavowing claims on Transylvania. This would alleviate pressure upon the Bucharest government, and remove the basis of support for the extreme nationalist parties. If the nationalist choke-hold on Romanian politics could be removed, a moderate government unhindered by extremist philosophies could increase the pace of minority rights reform. Thus, the two countries are their own worst enemies as well as potential partners in removing the tensions that exist between them.

## **B. PATHS FOR WESTERN INFLUENCE**

The prospect of continuing antagonism in Hungarian-Romanian relations has vital repercussions for the rest of Europe, and to a lesser extent the United States. The end of the Cold War removed the bipolar reality that existed in Europe for over forty years. The return of a multipolar Europe seems certain in the wake of bipolarity. The Soviet presence in Eastern Europe prevented open hostility between Romania and Hungary, but did little to address the root causes of the discord. The political and economic stagnation that was the legacy of communism exacerbated the situation.

Today, conflict between the two states remains a distinct possibility. This conflict could take the form of diplomatic antagonism (such as efforts to block the rival's integration with Western institutions), economic non-cooperation or open war, the prospects of which are discussed at the end of this chapter. "Warfare in Eastern Europe...might widen to include the major powers, because they would be drawn to compete for influence in that region, especially if disorder created fluid politics that offered opportunities for wider influence, or threatened defeat for friendly states.

Furthermore, because the results of local conflicts will be largely determined by the relative success of each party in finding external allies, Eastern European states will have strong incentives to drag the major powers into their local conflicts."<sup>256</sup> The two states also play important roles in preventing the spread of the Yugoslav war,<sup>257</sup> and constitute potential sources for future waves of immigration that could disrupt Western Europe.<sup>258</sup> Thus, the West should seek ways to prevent a future Romanian-Hungarian conflict.

The lack of stability at home is the direct cause of the inability of both Hungary and Romania to address the issues existing between them in a spirit of compromise. Three factors are involved in creating this instability: political chaos, economic stagnation, and social ills resulting from the collapse of the communist welfare state. These three factors are so intertwined that no one factor may be dealt with individually. Progress in resolving these fundamental problems would create domestic stability and thus promote better bilateral relations. Therefore, the West should exert its influence in these areas in order to help remove the obstacles to more amicable relations between Hungary and Romania.

Economic assistance represents the quickest means by which Western nations could positively influence events. However, simply granting aid does not equate to an increase in economic vitality. Both Romania and Hungary lack the capitalist skills and cultural understanding necessary to invest aid with any reasonable assurance of success without outside help. They also lack the political institutions and government mechanisms needed to oversee and manage an influx of large amounts of money. Romania's traditional resistance to outside interference, coupled with its capitalist inexperience (relative to the other Central European states), diminishes the chance for the success of foreign aid. Hungary is slightly more promising. Hungary's past association with the West and its traditional acceptance of foreign participation in the resolution of domestic issues makes it a prime candidate for loans and investment at first glance. However, the temptations posed by foreign aid could engender the return of the client-patron system in Hungary, the same system that socially and economically

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<sup>256</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to The Future. Instability in Europe After the Cold War," Atlantic, August 1990, pp. 33 - 34.

<sup>257</sup>Teodor Melascanu, "Security in Central Europe: A Positive Sum Game," NATO Review, October 1993, p. 14.

<sup>258</sup>F. Stephen Larrabee, "Down and Out in Warsaw and Budapest: East Europe and East-West Migration," International Security, Vol. 16, No. 4, Spring 1992, pp. 7, 16 - 18.

debilitated the former communist regime. Thus, while private investment could help both states recover their economic footing, large-scale investment of capital by foreign governments might be unwise until other, more pressing problems in Hungary and Romania are solved.

Acceptance of Hungary and Romania into existing Western European organizations appears to be the best long term means of positively influencing relations between these two states. "A firm and even-handed attitude of support by the European states could make all the difference [in surmounting the difficulties resulting from the collapse of communist Europe]."<sup>259</sup> NATO membership is the primary goal of both Hungary and Romania. However, they should be reminded that NATO also has weaknesses and that membership is not a solution in itself. NATO recognized this fact in its Rome declaration: "The challenges...cannot be...addressed by one institution alone...Consequently, we are working towards a new European security architecture in which NATO, the CSCE, the European Community, the WEU and the Council of Europe complement each other."<sup>260</sup> All of these institutions offer varying degrees of effectiveness in dealing with Hungarian-Romanian problems.

Several states and larger political entities have the ability to greatly influence Hungarian-Romanian relations:

#### **1. The United States and NATO**

There are many problems associated with admitting Hungary and Romania into NATO. The most serious challenge is the future role that organization envisions for itself. Proponents of full Hungarian and Romanian membership believe that this status will avert conflict and eventually promote improved relations, emulating what occurred between France and Germany, or the fragile peace that exists between Greece and Turkey. Detractors rightfully argue that using the alliance as a forum for preserving internal peace is tantamount to turning NATO into a collective security apparatus. Furthermore, excluding one or the other from membership could worsen current bilateral relations because the protection provided by membership could appear threatening to non-members. Partnership for Peace is intended to serve as a means of postponing the resolution of these inevitable issues while simultaneously helping the reform process.

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<sup>259</sup>Melescanu, "Security in Central Europe..." p. 15.

<sup>260</sup>"Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation," North Atlantic Council, 8 Nov. 1991, p. 19.



It is likely that NATO will offer Hungary full membership as soon as that state meets whatever requirements are set by the Western leaders. Once Hungary is integrated within NATO, the political cost of attempting to retake Transylvania would far outweigh any potential benefit, and thus it is highly unlikely that Budapest would attempt to do so. Even if association with the West failed to deter Hungarian political attacks against Romania through diplomatic channels, NATO's ability to deter aggression through the use of force would remain. After all, Romania is a participant in the PFP program and therefore NATO is obliged to "consult with any active participant in the Partnership if that partner perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security."<sup>261</sup> This statement effectively extends consultation rights to PFP members similar to those articulated in Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Thus, other NATO members could (at least in principle) take action against Hungary if Hungary were to attempt an occupation of Transylvania by force. The mere possibility of such a scenario would probably be enough to deter Hungarian irredentism.

As a member of NATO, Hungary would probably continue its attempts to improve the status of the Magyars within Romania. Membership would effectively make Hungary a "Western" nation, and give Budapest an equal voice with the other members of the Atlantic Alliance regarding the further expansion of this fraternity. Romania remains committed to Western integration, and therefore a NATO-integrated Hungary could improve the status of the ethnic Hungarians in Romania by using its newfound diplomatic leverage. Were Hungary to succeed in this endeavor, the easing of minority problems would break the chain of diplomatic posturing that currently hampers efforts to improve relations between the two states. Despite Romania's threats to the contrary, if Hungary was to be fully integrated into NATO first, there is little Bucharest could do but accept it. Romania's associations with the other major European organizations, which are also important to economically and politically unstable Romania, would be jeopardized by any other reaction.

NATO is the main Western security institution in which U.S. influence is unquestioned. The U.S. therefore has a direct means of helping to solve the Budapest-Bucharest diplomatic logjam. Western Europe's perennial fear of an American disengagement could be used to galvanize support for Hungarian membership in

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<sup>261</sup> Declaration of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 10 - 11 January 1994, p. 5.

NATO. In the meantime, clauses requiring the new PFP partners to bear the principal costs of the program could be lifted to help these struggling nations. Slow expansion into select states, in place of engulfing the entire PFP region, would assure states such as Turkey (which is currently concerned with the Russian buildup in the neighboring Caucasus region) that NATO will still be able to meet its collective defense commitments. This policy would also avoid the risk that accepting all of the PFP participants would dilute NATO's security assurances and hence its attractiveness to the new countries. Instead, the security and prestige which membership brings would provide a framework for prosperity and political stability in Hungary. A politically and economically successful Hungarian state would provide Romania with a large stable frontier and a nearby trading partner, both of which would be beneficial in Romania's own quest for Western integration.

Finally, the Yugoslav situation has shown that only the United States is capable of leading NATO into the future. If America takes a passive approach to NATO expansion, it is likely that the alliance will end up with a policy in which it responds to grave problems belatedly instead of addressing them before they reach crisis levels. Reactive crisis management is rarely as good as a thought-out, goal-oriented approach. If NATO is to expand, it should do so with a purpose. That purpose should be the fostering of stability in the new regions.

## **2. Western Europe**

As stated before, NATO membership by itself would not ensure the improvement of Hungarian-Romanian bilateral relations. "The NATO experience has shown...that the political strengths of a voluntary alliance of sovereign governments can entail functional weaknesses. NATO has no supranational authority: NATO's international staff assists in the coordination of alliance activities but has no directive or coercive powers. Most alliance decisions are made through consensus on the basis of lowest-common-denominator judgments acceptable to all the member governments and their publics."<sup>262</sup> Thus, it behooves Western nations to fully integrate Hungary and Romania into the other European institutions (including the EU, once the countries can achieve set standards for admission). Through the exchange of information between Hungary and Romania as well as the rest of Europe, mutual awareness and

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<sup>262</sup>David S. Yost, "NATO's Political-Military Challenges," *Current History*, Vol. 81, No. 479, Dec. 1982, p. 401.

understanding can be fostered; and thus the root problems of mistrust and discrimination can be resolved. Centuries of animosity will not be erased overnight, but close association will eventually create a new environment in which their differences can be addressed.

Social issues should be addressed through institutions intended to deal with those problems (such as the CSCE and UN), not by classical security organizations responsible for the physical protection of its members (such as NATO). There are many examples of how this can be achieved. The CSCE could conceivably "tackle transnational challenges, such as mass migration, pollution and drugs,"<sup>263</sup> in addition to continuing programs such as the Office for Free Elections. Finally, economic assistance in the form of managerial and investment expertise as well as limited capital should be conditioned on compliance with established norms of behavior such as the protection of human rights, including minority rights, the perpetuation of democratic ideals, and the acceptance of the inviolability of borders. Economic assistance is a vital ingredient in solving the current logjam.

### 3. Germany

Germany (and to a lesser extent Austria) wields significant influence in Romania and Hungary. German economic power is admired by both states. Romania respects Germany's industrial capacity as a result of its own experience in dealing with its ethnic German population as well as watching the modern German state. Hungary's long (albeit bittersweet) association with Vienna also remains a factor. Germany, and not NATO or the other European organizations, may represent the most coveted association of all. Membership in a German economic sphere could potentially provide security through economic strength and importance. The Visegrad countries "will cease to be attractive partners for each other at the moment when the robust suitor, Germany, arrives on the scene. Once Germany appears they [the Central European states] will fall over each other, [each state] demanding that they be chosen and not one of the others."<sup>264</sup> Germany's influence should be used in a fashion similar to that of the rest of

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<sup>263</sup>Josef Joffe, "Collective Security and the Future of Europe: Failed Dreams and Dead Ends," *Survival*, Spring 1992, p. 48.

<sup>264</sup>László Lengyel, "Europe Through Hungarian Eyes," trans. George Schöpflin, *International Affairs*, Vol. 66, No. 2, April 1990, p. 291.

Western Europe. Indeed, the German government will probably coordinate closely with its EU and NATO partners.

The results of excluding Romania from any economic participation would be devastating. A bilateral economic agreement between Germany and Hungary would appear very threatening to Romania from a security standpoint, if no comparable accord was made with Bucharest. This prospect would likely push Romania into the Russian sphere, or it could even bring about the explicit return of authoritarian government as a defensive backlash. Both scenarios could entail massive instability within the country. Instability within Romania traditionally hurts the minorities most. This would worsen Hungarian-Romanian relations and indirectly involve Germany in the dispute. Thus, the exclusion of Romania could have the snow ball effect of creating massive regional instability. German actions through intermediary groups such as the WEU appear less threatening, and the risks are more equitably distributed. Therefore, the United States and the European Union should attempt to encourage Germany to continue to operate within the framework of European institutions, or at the very least to include both Hungary and Romania in any future dealings.

#### **4. Russia**

Russia remains an important player in Hungarian-Romanian affairs by virtue of recent history, trade links and geopolitical realities. The crisis in Moldova, which pits Romania and Russia as adversaries, gives Russia another inroad into Romanian affairs. Although Russia today is a weakened state, it has traditionally been a major broker in Central European affairs by balancing against German and Austrian interests. Russia's influence is undeniable and therefore could have a role in resolving Hungarian-Romanian tensions. The West, owing to its economic strength, currently has a greater ability to sway Moscow's official foreign policy than ever before. This influence should be asserted so that Russia follows the West's lead in defining what is acceptable behavior by Hungary and Romania. At the same time, Russia's disavowal of any military interest in the region, through words and deeds, would alleviate Romanian and Hungarian fears and moderate the conviction that they must join the Western fraternity of nations now, while Russia is weak, or else lose the opportunity entirely. Such actions would lessen the security anxieties that presently drive the foreign policies of Budapest and Bucharest.

### C. PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION

Cooperation will occur only if both states back away from current posturing and follow amicable policies promoting reconciliation. Irredentism and minority rights disputes are essentially stalemating the bilateral treaty negotiations. Progress in both of these arenas could be instigated internally or through external forces. Future cooperation requires the current gridlock between the two states to end.

Hungary must irrevocably accept the inviolability of borders and refrain from intervening in Romania's minority affairs if the current leadership in Bucharest is to be satisfied. Today, Hungary accepts Transylvania as Romanian territory. "We [Hungary] are firmly resisting all aspirations aimed at the forceful change of the borders and an artificial transformation of national composition."<sup>265</sup> Tackling the problems existing within the contemporary Hungarian borders is difficult enough without attempting to take on the additional responsibilities resulting from any re-incorporation of Transylvania. This is not to say that Hungarian irredentism is a myth. Elements of Hungarian society certainly advocate the return of a Greater Hungarian state. However, as Hungary becomes more engaged in European associations the likelihood of Budapest attempting to reconstitute such a state diminishes because the costs simply become too great. Hungary's cultural acceptance of being a secondary power and its conviction that it is a Western nation mean that it will attempt to act as such. Furthermore, Hungary would not jeopardize the security such relations with the West give while residing in such a volatile region.

Convincing Romania of this is another matter. Only time can dispel Romania's deep-seated mistrust of Hungarian intentions. The extreme nationalist parties will continue to have little trouble playing upon Romania's cultural fears to obtain political support. These same nationalist parties will prevent Romania from accepting anything less from Hungary than explicit treaties renouncing irredentist intentions. Eventually, it may be hoped, Hungary's acceptance of a border inviolability clause will occur, given the HSP's agenda and political strength. This could lead to the signing of the bilateral treaty, but it would probably not dispel Romanian concerns about irredentist intentions in Hungary. The Greek-Turkish example shows that even common membership in security organizations is unlikely to settle the issue. The antagonisms surrounding

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<sup>265</sup>"Basic Principles of the Security Policy of the Republic of Hungary," *European Security*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer 1994), p. 353.

border issues will continue, albeit contained from escalating to open conflict as a result of integration into major Western institutions such as NATO and the EU.

Bucharest would also like to see an easing of minority rights demands by Romania's Magyars and Hungary. This will not occur as long as Hungary remains democratic. The HSP discovered in the last elections the strength of kinship between the Magyars. Despite campaigning against the previous government's preoccupation with Magyar rights to the detriment of other policy goals, once in power the HSP learned it had to continue these policies in order to maintain public support. The Hungarian population's general mistrust of government is a major concern for domestic stability, even for a political party with such an overwhelming electoral victory. Hungary will probably remain democratic in part because of this mistrust, but also because opposition groups and a multi-party system have taken root in the nation's politics. The current government, which has the power to retard democratic reform, will probably not do so for fear of a domestic uprising similar to that in 1956. The state no longer has the power or a powerful ally to quell such an uprising and to maintain control without popular support.

External forces offer a greater chance of changing Hungary's current stance on minority rights in Romania. Hungary's integration into Western institutions would provide the nation with a feeling of security from which it could truthfully address its own history, possibly at the urging of its new partners through friendly encouragement or economic incentives. Once Hungary takes stock of its own history, perhaps it will be more understanding of Romanian attitudes. A less judgmental approach to the problem would eliminate much of the verbal ammunition used by Romania's extreme nationalists and provide the moderate politicians more maneuvering room with which to address minority issues. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the easing of demands would help the moderates, especially if Romanian bigotry toward minorities is so deeply rooted as to prevent any reform. Therefore it is doubtful that even Western influences can surmount Hungary's self-appointed mission to help the Magyars abroad, and Budapest will probably continue present policies.

The odds of a change in Romanian attitudes towards minorities are equally bleak. The fact that popular history made up the foundation of the Romanian national myth long before communism took root illustrates that there are no simple solutions to these minority problems. The suspicious nature of all of the major ethnic groups residing in Romania makes it extremely difficult to find common ground from which to

work. Ending the escalation of the war of words being waged by all sides would constitute a victory. Any program aimed at relieving ethnic tensions will fail unless some fundamental steps are taken by all of the parties involved. Domestic peace will only be possible when economic and political reform are realized. None of these measures can occur as long as the government reliance upon the hyper-nationalist parties continues. Romanian cultural factors also resist change and simultaneously strengthen the extreme nationalist movements. Even were legislation enacted to ease minority persecution, the central government is ineffective in curtailing the ability of local authorities to circumvent such legislation. The failure of democracy could - paradoxically - help to improve inter-ethnic relations by giving the central government a greater capability to enforce its policies. However, Romania's history suggests that an authoritarian regime friendly to the minorities is doubtful, and such a government would probably increase discriminatory practices.

Romanian integration into Western institutions would affect ethnic affairs within the state positively. Such integration would give the Romanian minority parties significant leverage in the political arena. These parties have parlayed their ability to influence foreign opinions concerning Romanian domestic strife (and thus Bucharest's suitability for membership within the Western organizations) into tangible minority programs. Probably the greatest evidence of the positive effect prospective membership has had resides in the vehemence with which Romania's extreme nationalists have viewed such integration. The nationalists see membership as being detrimental to their agendas, which include the perpetuation of ethnic animosity in order to gain a larger political following. However, the influence of Western institutions is also limited. Western Europe can not stop the bigoted views and actions of local Romanian administrators who carry out the daily functions of the state. Educational programs established with the goal of enlightening Romanian attitudes will be countered by hyper-nationalist propaganda. The people will probably trust Romanian nationalists before accepting the word of outsiders who seek to dispel established "facts." Thus, it is doubtful that Romanian admission into Western institutions will remove minority tensions to a level acceptable to the West.

#### D. PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE CONFLICT

A military conflict between Hungary and Romania is unlikely. War is a costly endeavor and neither state has the economic or military capability to reasonably assure victory. The relationship between the Romanian and Hungarian military establishments is more positive than that of their political counterparts. Military relations have been good even during periods of political strain.<sup>266</sup> Therefore, pressure for conflict will not come from the generals. The wishes and actions of the people and their political leaders represent the greatest danger to peace.

An attempt by Hungary to retake Transylvania could be precipitated by an increase in domestic violence in Romania. As noted before, an increase in anti-minority violence is a real possibility if democratic reforms fail in Romania. However, economic success, which is important to Hungary's leadership and general population alike, is a more pervasive influence than Magyar kinship. Budapest realizes that economic success hinges upon Western aid and that the West would frown upon such irredentist activity. Furthermore, the social and economic chaos resulting from the incorporation of several million ethnic Romanians, as well as a million Magyars whose loyalty to the Hungarian state is doubted by some,<sup>267</sup> makes the incorporation of Transylvania far less attractive. Therefore, a Hungarian invasion is extremely unlikely. Budapest's real goal is to improve the lot of the Magyars *within* the Romanian state.

Armed conflict approaching civil war within Romania is another distinct possibility. Bucharest will not allow any revolt by the Magyars in Romania that could conceivably threaten the unitary state, including Magyar self-declared autonomy. If such a confrontation turned violent, the logical source of support for the Romanian Magyars would be Hungary. While Budapest would be unable to actively intervene in a Romanian civil war for fear of escalating the conflict (and the West's response to such involvement), it could not remain wholly detached, in view of the widespread sentiments of kinship for the Magyars. Private transfers of arms and aid (including troop volunteers) might be tolerated by a Budapest government for fear of losing its popular mandate. However, an actual government-sponsored intervention would not occur for the same reasons that hold Hungarian irredentist inclinations in check. The Hungarian government would probably enact official policies geared towards

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<sup>266</sup>Shafir, "Ethnic Tension Runs..." p. 24.

<sup>267</sup>Schopflin, "Roundtable..." p. 32.



containing the war, while simultaneously seeking a favorable diplomatic end to the conflict. War atrocities, which occur frequently during inter-ethnic struggles, could provide an avenue by which Hungary could be drawn into a Romanian civil war. Some Western observers might be persuaded to condone Hungarian intervention in such circumstances. However, pinpointing the blame in wartime is difficult, and Western support (or at the very least, indifference) would probably depend upon proving criminal actions on the part of Romania. There is also a chance that the Hungarian reaction to atrocities against Magyars at the grass roots level would overwhelm other policy considerations and virtually dictate Hungary's entrance into the war. Thus, as long as the possibility of Romanian internal conflict remains plausible, so too does the possibility of a Hungarian-Romanian war.

Hungarian-Romanian relations will improve as Hungary and Romania become more deeply integrated into the Western community of nations. This improvement may not mean friendship between the two states, but a better working relationship necessitated by a common need to become integrated with the West. The signing of a bilateral treaty between the two states would allow them to work together for common causes, regardless of whether Romania continues to follow the path of democracy. However, the difficulties dividing the two countries are too great to be resolved in a single generation. Conflict in the form of diplomatic posturing and verbal jousting may continue as before, but the threat of armed combat has subsided with the increase of Western influence in the region.

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